NĀGĀRJUNA

A Translation of his
Mūlamadhyamakakārikā
with an Introductory Essay



Kenneth K. Inada

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ADDENDUM TO THE PREFACE

Twenty three years have elapsed since the original publication of this work. Despite its second printing within five years, the copies were quickly sold and it soon became out of print.

But now under the good graces of Mr. Sunil Gupta of the Indian Books Centre, the fate of the work took a new turn. He kindly suggested that it be reprinted and included as a volume in the Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica Series. I of course heartily agreed and am profoundly appreciative of this gesture. I regret, however that I do not presently have the time to revise the work, i.e., to review the translations for accuracy and style and to expand on the introductory essay so as to update studies on Madhyamaka philosophy and literature which have inundated the field in the last twenty years. It proves that the field is alive and well, and that the future of its movement bodes well in Mahayana studies as well as in the extended areas of comparative thought and culture.

Buffalo, New York
August, 1993

Kenneth K. Inada

PREFACE

The present work is but a humble attempt to lay bare before the public the unique thought of Nāgārjuna (c. 150–250 A.D.) in translation by way of his major work, the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (hereafter, referred to as the *Kārikā* throughout the work) and by way of an introductory essay on his philosophy. The *Kārikā* or verses are, to be sure, very concise and for this reason cryptic and perhaps confounding. But it should be noted that it is not the written language that should be looked at askance since Sanskrit is a rather precise language and a remarkably advanced one at that for the presentation and propagation of thought. Basically, like all great works, it is the ideas relative to the truth of things that must be taken to task and not the language in use or the methodology involved. And yet, however defiant the ideas may be to clear analysis, scholars must constantly strike out for a better basis of understanding. To this end the present work is dedicated and thus, should it arouse even a single response from the reader for a better perspective of Nāgārjuna's philosophy and thereby Mahāyāna Buddhism as a whole, it would have served its basic and final purpose.

The complete English translation of the *Kārikā* in 27 Chapters is presented in sequence with the romanized version of the Sanskrit verses for easy reference. The *Kārikā* were derived from the *Prasannapadā* of Candrakīrti (c. 600–650 A.D.), edited by Louis De La Valée Poussin and published by the *Bibliotheca Buddhica* between 1903 and 1913. Being a commentary work, the *Prasannapadā* contains the original *Kārikā* by Nāgārjuna. For the advanced student of the Mahāyāna, nothing could be better than to compare the *Prasannapadā* with the Chinese work, *Chung-lun* (*Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, XXX, No. 1564), another commentary work by Piṅgala (c. 4th century A.D.) and admirably translated into Chinese by the famed

Kumārajīva (in China 401–413 A.D.). It was the *Chung-lun*, including its subsequent commentary works, which kept the Chinese and Japanese Buddhist scholars versed on the Mādhyamika or Śūnyavāda in a continued sense and fired the spirit of sectarian development and propagation in their respective countries.

Besides Th. Stcherbatsky's monumental work, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, which contains the *Kārikā* translation of Chapters I & XXV, plus the complete translation of Chapters I & XXV of the *Prasannapadā*, the following works in English can be referred to for comparative purposes.

Frederick J. Streng: *Emptiness*, A Study in Religious Meaning. Appendix A, "Fundamentals of the Middle Way," is the complete *Kārikā* translation.

Richard H. Robinson: *Early Mādhyamika in India and China*. Chapter II on Early Indian Mādhyamika contains many important translations from the *Kārikā*.

Heramba H. Chatterjee: *Mūla-Madhyamaka-Kārikā of Nāgārjuna*. Part I (Chapters I–V) and Part II (Chapters VI–VIII) have thus far appeared.

Other foreign language translations can be seen in the Bibliography.

Short prefatory remarks to each chapter have been inserted in order to present the reader a quick glimpse of each chapter content.

It only remains for me to thank those who are responsible for the publication of this work. Originally, to the late venerable Dr. Daisetz T. Suzuki who was a silent Zen godfather to me between 1949 and 1966 and who was responsible for introducing me to Dr. Shoson Miyamoto of the University of Tokyo who, in turn, introduced me to the intricacies but delights of the Mādhyamika; Dr. Miyamoto's enlightening seminars and cordial personal contacts outside the classroom will always be treasured; to Dr. Shinsho Hanayama whose Bodhisattvacaryā will always be held as a model

and in highest esteem; to Dr. Hajime Nakamura, former Dean of Humanities and current Head of the Department of Indian and Buddhist Studies, The University of Tokyo, whose genuine leadership and scholarship will always be objects of emulation; his personal interest in and encouragement of my work and well-being cannot fully be expressed; incidentally, he is directly responsible for the selection of this work as No. 2 in the *Tokyo Eastern Series*; to Dr. Reimon Yuki whose stimulating seminars on Yogācāra-vijñānavāda thought immeasurably aided me in understanding the Mādhyamika; to Dr. Mitsuyoshi Saigusa, scholar of Buddhist and Comparative philosophy, whose endearing friendship and kind suggestion have finally made it possible for the work to be published in this form; although he has kindly consented to see the work through the press, besides typographical errors which are inevitable, I must take full responsibility for all errors committed since the release of the manuscript to the press; finally, I must thank my wife, Masako, without whose abiding concern, closeness and understanding the myriad obstacles would have been insurmountable.

Kenneth K. Inada

Buffalo, New York
January 1970

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* The Chinese title headings have been inserted for comparative purposes and are derived from Kumārajīva's *Chung-lun* (中論 *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō,* XXX, No. 1564)

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

Nāgārjuna (c. 150–250 A.D.) has held continuous attention of Buddhists and Buddhist scholars in Asia since his own day. Even today he commands the greatest attention in the Western world insofar as philosophic Mahāyāna tradition is concerned. Though he did not establish a school or a system of thought as such, he did attract such overwhelming interest and appeal on the part of the masses by way of his unique writings that a tradition of a sort soon arose during his lifetime and a large following in consequence of it. He had a few faithful disciples, such as, Āryadeva and Rāhulabhadra, but after them there was never a continuous line of torchbearers. In spite of this, his ideas, though subtle and profound, carried such deep understanding and implications of fundamental Buddhist truths that they will influence, one way or another, all or most of the subsequent Mahāyāna developments in India, China, Tibet, Korea and Japan.

Indeed, insofar as Mahāyāna Buddhism is concerned, Nāgārjuna stands out as the giant among giants who laid the foundation of religious and philosophical quests. His supreme position has stood firm for centuries in all the countries blessed with the Mahāyāna form of Buddhism; and in the fervor to honor his stature, the people of these countries have in some cases elevated him to foremost heights, i.e., a bodhisattva, equal to all the deities and buddhas of the past, present and future. He was, in short, considered to be the second Buddha and he always occupied the second position in the lineage of Buddhist patriarchs in the various sectarian developments of Tibet, China, and Japan. On the other hand, his veneration at times reached such ridiculous heights that his name was sanctified and stamped everywhere with reckless abandon even for purposes of feigning scriptural authority. Despite the excesses of spirit displayed in dif-

ferent forms, we must acknowledge the fact that such religious veneration becomes an important vehicle for the propagation as well as continuity of Buddhism as such. But now, after so many centuries, it is the work of scholars to sift the pure from the impure, the proper basic doctrines from the deviated corrupted ones, in order to achieve a measure of balance and sensibility in the whole ideological flow of ideas from the historical Buddha to the present. In this attempt it will be seen that Nāgārjuna and his thoughts occupy an important place at the crucial crossroad in the subtle beginnings of the Māhāyāna as against the Theravāda tradition.

The early beginnings of the Mahāyāna are enshrouded in fragmentary and cursory accounts on the doctrinal similarities of certain early schools, such as, the Mahāsaṅghika or Sautrāntika, but exactly when, where, and on what grounds it began has never been clarified nor ascertained. Perhaps this question will forever remain unknown due to the paucity of literature on the matter. However, by the time of Nāgārjuna, we do know that the Mahāyāna tradition had already taken on clear lines of development and yet, to the chagrin of scholars, his life and the Buddhist activities of the times are not as clear as one would hope them to be. It is a case of the lack of corroborating material from Nāgārjuna himself and also from outside sources that we are stymied in the attempt to draw up an accurate picture of the historical and ideological play within the Mahāyāna. But the task before us, i.e., to study the thoughts of Nāgārjuna and thereby his influence on and contribution to the Mahāyāna, is by no means hopeless.

In particular, we have before us, his major work, the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, which sets forth at least his own interpretation of the fundamental thought of Buddhism viewed from the Mahāyāna standpoint. As it is written in versified form, terse and abstract, the doctrinal meaning and significance at times escape the unwary mind. The ideas manifest at once simplicity and complexity, a trait which no mean scholar of Buddhism could ignore or forget but a

trait which nevertheless has led astray many a scholar precisely on this account. Such being the case we sometimes witness devious interpretations of basic doctrines by worthy scholars. But such excesses in interpretation or acceptance cannot be taken too seriously since Nāgārjuna, though his verses exhibit cryptic strains, did not intentionally write in an esoteric manner nor did he write to serve only the scholarly elite. Whatever characterization we make, good or bad, with regards to his work and ideas, must be based on the nature of the doctrine or idea intended in the versified expression. By this it means that more than the man Nāgārjuna, as indeed he was a fallible creature, we must look into his accountings of fundamental doctrines and judge thereof his faithfulness, perceptiveness and creative novelty. He was frank, to be sure, in admitting that he expounded nothing new and that he was only elaborating on the teachings of the historical Buddha. Thus, the task is not simple and it is important to seek a sense of direction and temporal dimension in the analysis.

The age prior to Nāgārjuna is an almost "no man's land" as far as extant literature is concerned because firstly, the texts are rather scanty and secondly, authors of texts are not accurately known. The whole mass of *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*(1), which began to appear some time in the 1st century B.C. and which continued to be constructed as well as exert influence until the very end of Buddhism in India in the 12th century A.D., is a good example of the type of early or founding texts which express the highest and most profound understanding of the Mahāyāna but such understanding could scarcely be attributed to a single man or a handful of individuals.

Nāgārjuna then appeared at the opportune moment to present a concise and systematic view of thoughts crystallized over the five or six centuries since the Buddha. And indeed, on the matter of time alone, those centuries were important and necessary to permit the mellowing and maturing process to come to a climax, so to speak, and thereby to produce the dominant ideas that were to be

felt in the further developments of the Mahāyāna in India and elsewhere.

Naturally, in understanding this process, we cannot neglect nor ignore the most active, highly vibrant, and competitive age in Buddhist history known as the Abhidharma period. Scholars have heretofore paid relatively little attention to the influence of this period but it has actually played the central role, if not the greatest role, in the development and propagation of Buddhism as a whole. If there are high watermarks to be considered in Buddhist history, the Abhidharma period certainly rates a very high level, a level of great fermentation and flourishment of Buddhist thought. Ideologically speaking, no other period in Buddhist history, whether of the Theravāda or Mahāyāna, or even national Buddhist developments such as in T'ang Dynasty China, could ever match or come up to the level of activity as recorded during this period. The so-called eighteen schools(2) which vied for the true understanding of the historical Buddha's teachings express the flower of the struggle of that period. Sadly, however, we are heirs to only two complete sets of Abhidharma literature among them and a single fragmentary text(3) which cannot specifically be assigned to any one of the schools.

A glance at the two complete sets(4) shows a marked similarity in compilation, i.e., the same number of seven works, but the internal contents differ quite drastically. And yet, on close scrutiny the terms or concepts employed deal with practically the same subject matter, i.e., the description of the internal constitution of man by way of the *skandhas*, *dhātus*, *āyatanas* and *dharmas*(5) and finally the right understanding of these *dharmas* which would ultimately result in the attainment of the *nirvāṇic* realm of being. Thus, with the Abhidharma, the same underlying philosophy of the Buddha—suffering, cause, cessation and the way—is kept intact but the emphasis on the elaborate elemental and descriptional aspect is focussed on for the first time by all Abhidharma schools. It is not so much that these schools were different or tried to be different as it is that they

exhibited serious concern to seize the Buddhist truth as each of them saw fit. In the heightened and competitive activity that they were engaged in, their works took on the nature of being too complex and abstract for ordinary Buddhists to follow. And yet this was not deliberate cover-up attempts on the part of any scholastics of the period. They were principally concerned with the definitizing of the concept of man as a suffering creature by virtue of his internal constitution situated within the context of the wider so-called external matrix of things and of what could be done with that situation. They did not deviate a bit from the historical Buddha's teachings insofar as fundamental principles or doctrines go. This seems to be one of the basic reasons for the monotonous and repetitious nature of the works besides the fact that such a nature promoted easy remembrance of the doctrines. They invariably returned to the Buddha's words for further analysis, elaborations and insight into man's situation, a situation always seen in the context of the 4-fold Noble Truth.

It seems strange that this earnest attempt to understand the human situation by way of the *dharma* theory[6] should cause a host of scholars to literally brand Buddhism of the Abhidharma origin as pluralism or pluralistic in the metaphysical sense. The very first sign of this interpretation, though not by design, occurs with Warren's translation of the term *dhamma* (*dharma*) as "elements of existence" or "elements of being."[7] It is seen that he labored much and could not come to a definitive translation of the term and finally settled for the above. But his phrases are only suggestive and he actually left the door open for better translations. Yet, almost at once, we note that scholars have accepted this phrase without discretion nor digestion and employed it quite freely. Perhaps, the rapid rise of the sciences toward the end of the 19th century and on into the 20th century, and the subsequent employment of the scientific method even in the humanistic sciences, prompted the initial rush towards accepting an atomistic analysis of natural

phenomena in all respects. However, paradoxically enough, this atomism will in time give way to a non-atomistic and more dynamic view of nature. Meanwhile, the tenure of the phrase, "elements of existence," has been long.

For example, we find in the writings of the great Russian Buddhologist, Th. Stcherbatsky, a rather sharp scientific bent in the analysis of the Buddhist concept of man. He accepts the translation, "elements of existence," as substantially accurate. In his work,[8] he employs the following phrases: "pluralistic whole," "separate elements," "plurality of separate elements," "pluralism and radical pluralism," and yet, in the end, he seems to be at wits end when in direct confrontation with the term itself he concludes thus: "But, although the conception of an element of existence has given rise to an imposing superstructure in the shape of a consistent system of philosophy, its inmost nature remains a riddle. What is *dharma?* It is inconceivable! It is subtle! No one will ever be able to tell what its real nature (*dharma-svabhāva*) is! It is transcendental!"[9]

Stcherbatsky knew that he was dealing with a difficult term and he tried his best to justify all aspects of the constituents of man's nature by drawing on current scientific terminology to render clear what had eluded scholars before. But his acceptance and employment of the phrase, "element of existence," caught on and we find that this atomistic and scientific interpretation will be accepted rather uncritically by subsequent interpretators.[10] Consequently, the interpretations of the Abhidharma oriented systems, whether of Theravāda or Mahāyāna origins, have been simply extended the label of pluralistic atomism.

The technical term for the alleged radical pluralism is *sanghāṭa-vāda*. In the compounded term, the suffix, *vāda*, refers to the "doctrine," "concept," "way," "school," or simply in Western terminology the equivalent of an "ism." This does not cause any problem in translation. What however causes the problem is the term, *sanghāṭa*. The Pāli derivation is *sanghaṭeti*, which literally means "binding

together."[11] This term then has the meaning of "union," "junction," "collection," "aggregation," etc... not in the sense of elements in union, collection, aggregation, etc., but in the unique sense of elements being what they are by virtue of the aggregated, collected, united or binded nature of things. This, in other words, is not to assert the existence of separate elements of existence first and then to see them in aggregation. The *dharmas* do not have any a priori status. Rather, it is to indicate the existential nature of so-called "elements" (*dharmas*) in the matrix of relatedness. Thus one's experience is a fact of unique relatedness but at the same time the particular experience can be factored into different aspects. In this sense, the *dharmas* give a pluralistically factored nature or conception to experience and never the other way round, i.e., that they, the *dharmas*, underline experience in terms of an interplay or an aggregated construction out of them. (Confer Chapter XX where Nāgārjuna systematically denies any atomistic assertions to both causes and conditions, and their union as such.)

All this, on the other hand, does not mean to promote absolutism of any sort. It is the function of reason, normally speaking, to be critical of positions or viewpoints and thereby set up alternatives for decision making. However, reason cannot and should not be used as an apogogic device, i.e., the rejection of a view does not automatically mean the acceptance of another. Consequently, the rejection of pluralism, simple or radical, does not mean the acceptance of monism or any form of absolutism.

Insofar as the term, "monism," is concerned, Buddhism undoubtedly leaned toward some form of monistic understanding of man's existence as witnessed, for example, in the Yogācāra-vijñānavāda and certain aspects in the tantric traditions both in and out of India. Monism, in the strictest Buddhist sense, refers to the ontologically unified view of man and therefore admits to factoral analysis of his experience. Buddhism is still, in this respect, a man-centered understanding of things and never man indifferently bound to nature. It

cannot, except for later deviations from true Buddhism, tolerate the metaphysically transcendent monistic system that the unwary interprets it to be or read into it. As a rule, based on fundamental teachings of the Buddha, principles or doctrines which are transcendental or super-mundane are not admissible...a rule which all too often is glossed over, neglected, or even consciously rejected in favor of the easy but hopelessly erroneous monistic interpretation of Buddhist ideas.

In this respect too the term, "absolutism," has no real significance relative to either Buddhist doctrines or Buddhism as such. Scanning through all the philosophical ideas, there is not a single concept which lends itself to a totally absolutistic interpretation in the strictest sense. Even the Buddha, as the historically enlightened being, is never referred to as a metaphysical absolute. Such other terms as *Tathāgata*, *Dharmakāya*, *Nirmaṇa-kāya*, *Sambhogakāya*, *Śūnyatā*, *Pratītya-samutpāda* and even *Nirvāṇa*, are to be treated likewise. If it were otherwise, Buddhism would then easily fall into a system of absolute First Principles and whereupon these principles would dictate everything in the whole of nature. There would be no challenge to understanding the empirically grounded existential strains in our common everyday lives; there would be no meaning to the enthusiasm for the search of the basis of life itself. But the absolute or absolutism has no real place in the scheme of Buddhist analysis of man, in the so-called ontologically structured metaphysics of man which is through and through empirical. The very refusal to answer categorically the metaphysically grounded questions[12] by the Buddha himself should be a constant warning to those who facilely resort to labelling any doctrine or facet of Buddhism into convenient forms of monism or absolutism. Be it said once and for all that Buddhist philosophy cannot admit or submit to any ideas with cosmic dimensions. If such were ever the case, then it would be, at that very particular point, not philosophical Buddhism at all but certain outlandish and corrupted form of Bud-

dhism which in all eventuality would have little or no real meaning for those who earnestly pursue the true basic doctrines.[13] Buddhism must be viewed as a thoroughgoing naturalistic view of man. This simple focus on man has all the makings of an elaborate and highly technical accounting of man as seen in the Abhidharmika systems. But no one ought to be confused or even dismayed by the elaborate terminology in use for they are only convenient tools or means for the explorations into man's fundamental sentient nature.

It is sometimes said that Nāgārjuna appeared at the right moment and at the right place in Buddhist history to provide the necessary corrective measures to Buddhist philosophical analysis of man's nature and thereby initiated a "new" movement within the Mahāyāna tradition. First of all, however, it must be remembered that he did not appear out of a vacuum but rather that he came after a long period of Buddhist activity in India proper. At least six or seven centuries had transpired between the historical Buddha (6th century B.C.) and Nāgārjuna (circa 2nd–3rd centuries A.D.), a time in which Buddhists actively explored, criticized, and propagated the Buddhist truth. This is the period which produced the eighteen contending schools of the Abhidharmika system discussed earlier and also the time which saw the germs of the break in the interpretation of the nature of the summum bonum (*nirvāṇa*) between the Hīnayāna (inclusive of modern Theravāda) and Mahāyāna traditions. At the same time, secondly, it should be noted that the Mahāyāna tradition in its earlist phase, i.e., pre-Christian period, had already produced some of the most attractive and arresting thoughts in Buddhist history. . . thoughts which are considered most fundamental to all subsequent developments in the tradition.[14] Sūtras relative to this period concentrate on the universal and extensive sameness (*samatā, tathatā*) in the nature of man, his supreme wisdom (*prajñā*) and compassion (*karuṇā*), all of which describe the concept of a *bodhisattva* or enlightened being. They expound ad infinitum the purity, beauty and ultimate rewards of the realization of this

supreme realm of being in language which is at once esthetic, poetic and dramatic but which at times are painfully frustrating to the searching rational mind. For example, the empirically oriented mind would not be able to accept and adapt simple identities of the order (or realm) of worldly (mundane) and unworldly (supermundane), empirical and nonempirical, common everyday life (*saṁsāra*) and uncommon enlightened life (*nirvāṇa*), pure (*sukha*) and impure (*asukha*), and finally, form (*rūpa*) and emptiness (*śūnyatā*). In the final identity of form and emptiness, a climax in the ideological development is reached where the sūtras, in particular the whole *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*, elaborate on the point that all forms are in the nature of void (*śūnya*). Thus, such forms in the nature of a sentient creature or being (*sattva*), a soul or vital force (*jīva*), a self (*ātman*), a personal identity (*pudgala*) and separate "elements" (*dharmas*) are all essentially devoid of any characterization (*animitta, alakṣaṇa*). The quest for voidness or emptiness is thoroughgoing with the aim being the non-grasping (*agrāhya*) and at once the emptiness of the personal experiential components (*pudgala-śūnyatā*) and of the personal ideational components (*dharma-śūnyatā*). This is the final goal of the *nirvāṇic* realm, here and now, without residues (*anupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa-dhātu*) and achievable by all.

Needless to say, the understanding of the above identities is the constant challenge and the most profound feature of the Mahāyāna, if not the whole of Buddhist philosophy. Unquestionably, Nāgārjuna was faithful to this lineage of ideas and he tried his hand in crystallizing the prevailing ideas. He came to bundle up the loosely spread ideas, so to speak, and gave a definite direction in the quest of man.

Apart from radical pluralism and monism of the absolutistic type, there are a few other charges made against Nāgārjuna and his tradition which ought to be noted. One of the principal arguments refers to nihilism. It is a popular and an understandable charge if one were only to seek for and rely on the linguistic aspect in order to draw his own conclusions. Indeed, the very term, *śūnya*, has

evolved a tradition with reference to Nāgārjuna's philosophy, i.e., the Śūnyavāda. *Śūnya* means, in the literal sense, "empty," "vacuous," "void," "nothing," etc., and thus it would seem natural, solely based on linguistic grounds, to refer to Śūnyavāda as the school or doctrine of emptiness, voidness, or nothingness.(15) This is certainly an uninitiated naive understanding which cannot even stand up to the fundamental or main doctrines of Buddhism which Nāgārjuna and his followers were careful not to violate. Indeed, the Buddhists tried to propagate such doctrines in a consistent and sustained manner permissible by language. But the emphasis on the language or the linguistic aspect may actually turn out to be a limiting function in Buddhism for, in the use of a term, there is only peripheral or superficial reference to an event or experience and never with respect to concrete reference to the nature of things themselves in totality. This is also true in the West. It is trite to say that language can never reach reality per se and yet we must remind ourselves of this to restitute the Śūnyavāda from the charge of nihilism.

In a sense it is true that language does reflect the forms and characteristics of nature itself and even of human experience. Being man's construction, it must necessarily represent the closest facsmiles to the reality of things while remaining faithful to the socio-psychological context. But it must never become absolute or that a one-to-one correspondence made with respect to language and reality. In such a way, Indian philosophy including Buddhism, is replete with instances where terms are faithful to reality but still, in the ultimate sense, remains defiant of absolute connection. It is paramount to keep in mind that language must meet the strictest requirements in the determination and communication of terms. But the formal aspect, the conceptual and logical, must never be pushed to a realm where technical mists cloud and all too often dictate the final interpretation.(16) *Śūnya* or *śūnyatā* (the state of *śūnya*) is one such term which does not lend itself to strict determination and communication because it is rooted in the basic ontological nature

of man. It refers to man's perfected pure state of being without the normal elements of defilements or attachments. Buddhism, from the very beginning, had spoken of the dual nature of defilements which constantly plague man, i.e., the so-called "physical tainting" (*kleśāvaraṇa*) and the "conceptual tainting" (*jñeyāvaraṇa*). Both are only two aspects of the total status of defllement imposed by man himself, and such imposition, consciously or unconsciously, becomes the basis of his limiting, restrictive, divisive or discriminative activities. It would therefore be wrong to straightforwardly assign defilement or attachment to either the merely "physical" or the merely "mental." Buddhism sees man in totality with respect to the matrix of both aspects, and to this extent it is monistic in the ontological sense. Thus it is incorrect to interpret the mental or conceptual aspect as wholly responsible for the interpretation of the nature of things[17] since the total activity, the conceptual rooted in the physical basis and the physical basis running throughout the conceptual process, must be accounted for at all times. If this be mysticism, then it is the supreme mysticism to which all of Buddhism subscribes. However, it is at this very point that Buddhism seeks final rationale in the nature of man's being. This is where Nāgārjuna with his unique use of certain concepts, such as *śūnya*, tried to interpret the Buddhist truth.

Consequently, *śūnya* or *śūnyatā* refers to total being without the defiled or attached conditions and, as such, there is nothing removed from man's being and his activities, nothing nihilistic or voided in his ordinary existence.

Another popular charge, quite related to the charge of nihilism and perhaps considered a corollary, is that of negativism.[18] Somehow the concept of *śūnya* seems to connote a negativistic view of reality to the unwary. But negativism is not a charge limited to the Śūnyavāda because Buddhism since its inception had always referred to or presented its principal doctrines in negative ways which, by the way, can be taken as another argument for the limited

use of language in describing reality. For example, the famous "Three Marks" (*trilakṣaṇa*) of Buddhist distinction, i.e., three principal features which distinguish Buddhism from other systems of thought of India proper, are impermanence (*anitya*), non-objectified self (*anātman*), and suffering (*duḥkha*). All three are negative expressions of the phenomena of existence.

Impermanence (*anitya*) refers to the inexorable fleeting, ever-changing status of life. In the Heraclitean sense, no two moments are identical and thus every existential moment is new or novel. Sadly, man requires the passage of conventional time to remember the so-called great or monumental moments by their outstanding features, although such moments are basically similar in nature to all the rest of the seemingly unconscious moments of his existence. But the impermanence doctrine is only a reminder of the existential continuity which man must be cognizant of at all times if he is to live properly or wholesomely in the ultimate sense.

Non-objectified self, or popularly rendered as non-self (*anātman*), refers to the conditionality or the ontologically contingent nature of man which defies positive ascription. Man's existence, in short, is an intricate labyrinth or matrix of conditions, where no one or two or several of these conditions can ever do justice to man's description. He is contingent at all times in this sense and thus non-objectifiable. Or, if he were to lend himself to analysis, it would only have to be in the negative sense, the non-ātman.

Finally, suffering (*duḥkha*) refers to the status of man in the empirically bound sense. That is to say, he is a bundle of suffering by virtue of the ontologically objectified attachments he maintains both on the "physical" and "mental" levels. Until or unless he can relinquish himself from these objectified attachments (*upādāna*) or coverings (*āvaraṇa*), his perfected ontological status will not be fulfilled. The desires and cravings refer specifically to the unwarranted "longings" for the phantasmagorically objectified or permanentized elements of life process. Once more, in this sense,

suffering is a negatively expressed condition of man who can convert himself into something positively pure. The cessation of Buddhist suffering (*duḥkha-nirodha*) constitutes at once enlightenment (*bodhi*)[19]

Furthermore, *nirvāṇa* is sometimes added to the above as a further distinguishing characteristic of Buddhism and this concept also refers to reality negatively, i.e., the state of all defilements and attachments blown out. In sum, if one were to gather all or most of the tenets of Buddhism, one would be most surprised to note a host of negatively expressed ideas controlling and guiding his approaches to the understanding of reality. But the point is that one should not be as unwary as to be controlled by these negative concepts in definitive terms. They are only indicators, markers for the suppression of falsely objectified views and, at the same time, suggestive of the true positive content of reality or life in the making.

Still another charge levelled against the Mādhyamika is that of relativism. It is supposedly an outcome of the failure to comprehend rightfully the true nature of the middle path (*madhyamā-pratipad*). As the path is the avoidance of maintaining both extremes, i.e., the realms of luxury and asceticism, it is swiftly concluded that the fundamental teaching of the Buddha must be a kind of relativism, a shifting of values between the two realms. But the path, in reality, is a total concept which involves the full ontological basis of man as we shall shortly discuss.

But what principally seems to give rise to the relativistic interpretation is the translation of the technical term, *pratītyasamutpāda.* This term has eluded the best minds in the search for a plausible expression. For example, it has variously been translated as follows: causal genesis, theory of the twelve causes, twelve-fold causal chain, arising from conditional causes, dependent origination, dependent coorigination, dependent existence, conditioned origination, relativity, and the principle of (universal) relativity. The basis of these translations come from the early general formula for the cycle (wheel)

of life found in various places of the Pāli Nikāyas (e.g. *Majjhima Nikāya*, II, 32; *Samyutta Nikāya*, II, 28) and which runs as follows: this being, that becomes; from the arising of this, that arises; this not becoming, that does not become; from the ceasing of this, that ceases. In Chapter XXVI of the *Kārikā*, Nāgārjuna treats this basically Hīnayānistic doctrine and destroys (or corrects) any notion implied which suggests the staticity of the parts (*aṅga*) of the cycle of life.

However, it seems that the term translated as the principle of relativity with all the overtones of modern science has become very popular and acceptable even by scholars. This technical term undoubtedly does have "strains" of the relativistic notion but not in the normal nor in the scientific sense. It should be interpreted in the total ontological sense which means that the rise of an experiential event is spread both "spatially" and "temporally" in a dynamic sense. That is to say, the relational structure is not static but underscored by the co-arising phenomenon of the total nature of things, although some elements at play are significantly present while others remain insignificant. Thus, *pratītyasamutpāda*, might be rendered as relational origination. The term, relational, is a neutral concept insofar as the ontological implications are concerned but simultaneously it refers to a lateral, horizontal, and vertical relational structure to the moment in question. There is no reliance on anything alien nor an imposition by an alien force in the process because the moment is a moment by virtue of its own creative or constructive (*karmaic*) process. Thus the term, relational, makes way for both the active and the passive functions of the so-called "subject" in question. And the term, origination, refers to the arising of a novel moment by virtue of the total relational structure impelled by a natural dynamics of its own.

It must be remembered that Th. Stcherbatsky, coming at the time of the popular and general acceptance of Einsteinian physics, had gone extensively overboard to dub this concept as the principle of relativity.[20] This phrase, more than any other Buddhist concept,

has to this day made science and Buddhism ever closer, or even to the extent of identifying both as seen in some quarters. Naturally, this is going too far for neither discipline can be synonymous in any consistent sense although Buddhist principles are on the whole readily amenable to scientific interpretation but it is hardly the case the other way around. In spite of this, it is agreed by many that Buddhist teachings come very close to the ideas expounded in modern psychology and even psycho-analysis as seen, for example, in the analysis of man's genetic development in terms of *skandhas*, *āyatanas*, *dhātus* and including the concept of *karma* with respect to man's actions—past, present and future.

The doctrine of *pratītyasamutpāda* is then a basic concept in all Buddhist traditions whether of the Theravāda or Mahāyāna; it is so basic with Nāgārjuna that he will use it as the key concept in meeting ontological reality "face to face," so to speak. It is the ruling concept underlying all the discussions in the chapters of the *Kārikā*. Thus the argumentation lodged against all systems, positions or viewpoints (*dṛṣṭi*) by Nāgārjuna is not another way of establishing a standpoint, e.g. relativism, but it is an unique way of calling to attention the myriad and multi-phased factors or conditions at play in the immediate concretizing karmaic present which, by the way, is the only locus whereby concourse with reality as such (*yathābhūtam*) can be had.

Finally, there are a few scholars who interpret Nāgārjuna as the supreme logician or dialectician as if truth could be educed logically or by a dialectical effort.(21) To be sure, the *Kārikā* exhibit traits of logical inferences from time to time but this is not true in all instances.(22) If there are semblances of a consistent use of logic or a form of dialectic, these at best only depict the play or function of reason and not in terms of "awakening" reason to a wondrous realm of existence.(23) It is true that ordinarily man is sorely unaware of the ground for his own thinking process, a ground which might be termed the psycho-physical continuum throughout

the whole being. Clarity, purity, unclouded thinking are, after all, aspects of the rational play but such a play is only one of the attributes of the sense world. That is to say, the mind (*citta*) and its function (*caitasika*) are only considered parts of the function of the sensible realm in Buddhism and never as separate or transcendental aspects of being. More specifically, along with the five sense organs, the mind is considered to be another sense organ. This is one of the ways in which Buddhism treats the continuum of being and avoids the simple dichotomy of mind-body or subject-object relationship. This fact is so easily overlooked in later developments but it is so basic to all Buddhist thought, early or later, that no interpreter could ill afford to neglect this unity of being from its genetic beginnings.

The term dialectic is derived from the Greek, "dialektikē," which means to hold a discourse or debate. Now, a discourse or a debate may be for two reasons: First, for sophistical refutation or a critique for critique sake. This is otherwise known as eristic or given to mere disputations. Second, for an end in view, i.e., the search ultimately for a truth whatever that implies. The first may be termed negative or destructive dialectic, while the second positive or constructive dialectic. Needless to say, we are concerned with the second. However, the problem of assigning a kind of dialectic to Nāgārjuna's philosophy is not as easy as it seems on first thought. We must remember that there have been pros and cons on this matter since the beginning and the issue is still unsettled. First of all, it would seem almost a violation of terms to attempt an association of a dialectic with the non-assertive type of Nāgārjuna's philosophy. It is one thing to say that his logical disputations consist of the dual aspect of the destructive and constructive natures of a dialectic as the Westerner understands by the term but it is another matter to say how and in what manner they function together; and it is still another matter to distinguish between the two and to speak of them separately. In the *Kārikā* we do find logical analysis

pushed to its extremes or to a *reductio ad absurdum.* This would be the reason why the group represented by Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti is called the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamika which reduces all assertions to the category of ultimate absurdity. But how far can we go along with the Prāsaṅgika and his logic or dialectic in use? Was Nāgārjuna's philosophy basically characterized by the spirit of destructive dialectic or constructive dialectic or both? Can we speak of destructive and constructive dialectics separately or does one entail or imply the existence of the other such that the two are invariably co-existent? If the latter, are we in so-called grounds where neither logic, dialectic, nor empirical understanding may tread? These and many other subtle questions are by no means easy to answer. It is recalled that the Prāsaṅgika immediately had a rival in the Svātantrika Mādhyamika led by Bhāvaviveka which tried to avoid the folly of a logic of deduction *ad absurdum* (*prasaṅga-vākya*) and favored the insertion of a counter position in any argument. Again, it is to be noted that Nāgārjuna's disciple Āryadeva and, in turn, Rāhulabhadra busied themselves in the refutation of contending schools of thought in order to defend the true Mādhyamika position. Now, undoubtedly, there was *a something* to defend and uphold, something which became the core of the Śūnyavāda tradition. However, it is questionable whether that something does lend itself to logic or dialectics in the Buddhist enlightening process.

We might conclude here by saying that Nāgārjuna is not a logician or a dialectician of the Western brand and that the Buddhist truth, if forthcoming at all, is not the result of logic or dialectics. Truth does not lend itself to mere rational accounting however subtle or refine that may be. It is rather the result of *prajñā*, the so-called "eye of wisdom," the instrument which cuts open and at once reveals reality for what it is. And yet, *prajñā*, in this sense, is only a tool which presents itself only at the opportune moment after rigorous training inclusive of total being, but the potential of its

realization and thereby its cutting power lies nascent in every living being. Nāgārjuna, however, does not treat this special doctrine of *prajñā* in the *Kārikā* in any systematic manner. This is left to the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* which were abundantly in extant during his time since he was an heir to their teachings, and one of which he is alleged to have commented on.[24]

If Nāgārjuna is not to be labelled an absolute monist, radical pluralist, nihilist, negativist, relativist, logician and finally dialectician, what then can be said of him and his philosophy? It would seem that there is but one definite and practical approach to guide us. It is that Nāgārjuna's thoughts, however elusive they seem to be, must be made coincident with the most original and fundamental teaching of the historical Buddha, i.e., the doctrine of the middle path (*madhyamā-pratipad*), as indeed he himself asserts several times in the *Kārikā* that he is only following the Buddha's words. It is a doctrine accepted by all and at once the quest of all. It is the supreme "ontological principle" in Buddhism. Later on, to be sure, the concept of *nirvāṇa* will be used interchangeably with the middle path to describe the perfected state of man.

The middle path, as initially discoursed in the Buddhist foundation sūtra and later called the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* (The Sūtra on the Exposition of the Buddhist Dharma or Truth; Confer *Samyutta-nikāya*, IV, 329 and V, 420), indicates that it is realized by the avoidance of the two extremes. What extremes? The extremes of the realism of activities relative to luxury and asceticism. One side engenders the quest for affluent matters and things which are of the nature of permanency and eternality (*śāśvata-vāda*) while the other the quest for total self-abnegation, self-effacement and of the nature of impermanence, nihilism and annihilationism (*uccheda-vāda*). In both instances there arise the root evil forces of objectifying or entifying either the elements related to wealth or riches on the one hand or "elements" related to non-entity, nihility or negativity on the other. And furthermore, there is the grasping, clinging (*upādāna*)

to the objectified content or elements within the ever-flowing existence. Thus in each instance, there exist the extreme (*anta*) of being "caught up" in the objectified elements within the perspective or viewpoint (*dṛṣṭi*) that one consciously or unconsciously maintains, i.e., the elements are abstracted, taken out of context, and staticized into lifeless images and thereupon viewed as real . . . all the time unmindful of the basic stream of life. Stated in another metaphorical way, the clinging on to objectified elements in the ontological flow is analogous to the messy or sticky affair of a fly caught in an ointment, and this affair seems to be a never-ending, ever obstructive and disharmonious way of life. Some become conditioned to this situation over a long habitual and mainly unconscious livelihood and thus accept it to be the normal course of things without ever finding out the more easeful and wholesome way of life potentially there; while others are more impatient and troubled and consequently fight against it openly or not so openly and thus go on in the seemingly interminable struggle on the strictly superficially empirical level of things.

The middle path doctrine is the Buddhist ontological principle which avoids the two extremes[24] and at once resolves them in the way of taking on the dimension of inclusiveness or immanence of all things, including of course the perspective or viewpoint of the person concerned. Thus the middle path is the "vision of the real in its true form." Nothing is excluded, nothing is negated, nothing is abstracted. Everything is . . . in the sense of inclusive or immanent transcendence. The middle path might then be termed the ontological inclusiveness, excellence, purity or supremeness of being.

Nāgārjuna captured and continued this fundamental message on the nature of man's highest state and gave his own "systematic" treatment of it by way of the *Kārikā*. He was the supreme Buddhist ontologist. He gave direction to man for his ontological quest in the mundane world. Though man is initially bound by defilements, ultimately he is capable of channelling his life to richer, fuller and

purer realms. Understood in this sense, the *Kārikā* are nowheres unintelligible, confusing, misleading or insignificant. They are indeed consistent, meaningful and persuasive.

No positive assertion on the methodology of Nāgārjuna may be made, especially after denying that there is any consistent use of neither logic nor dialectic to educe ultimate truth (*tattva*). However, if a phraseology were to be coined, it might be termed the "way of *śūnya*." And this "way" is termed by some Asian as well as Western scholars as the "logic of *śūnya*." Thus termed, the "logic" must be one of showing the way to the ultimate understanding that *śūnya* is the realized content of all experiential components (*dharmas*) because of the contingent dynamics of nature (*pratītya-samutpāda*). It is a "method" only in the sense of exhibiting the whys and wherefores of all views (*dṛṣṭi*), proper or improper, and of asserting the thusness of experiences as such (*yathābhūtam*).

To be sure, the *Kārikā* are difficult to read and understand because the method of criticizing any view (*dṛṣṭi*) to its logical necessity (*prasaṅga*) and thereby to exhibit its absurdity, is basically an exercise in seeing the proper relationship between the two-fold aspect of truth (Chapter XXIV, 8, 9). This is to say, the reader must be able to distinguish between the realms of empirical "relative" truth (*saṃvṛti-satya*) and of non-empirical "supreme" truth (*paramārtha-satya*). He must, as it were, be able to shift his gears of ontological understanding. The phrase, "ontological understanding" seems redundant but it is used advisedly in the sense that there is an understanding with reference to the existential or sentient nature of the individual. This nature generally has not been accorded its due import in the past since sentient creatures usually forget the basis of their own existence and tend to run off into the clouds of intellection, becoming increasingly unmindful of the totality of the nature of things.

Naturally, the concept of *śūnyatā* is with reference to the supreme nature of truth but this does not mean that the concept is not

relatable to the empirical nature of truth. The key concept here is, as mentioned earlier, relational origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*). It is a so-called bridge concept which spans both realms of truth. It presents a unique perspective of reality (*bhava*) and permits the perceptive one to have glimpses of the relational structure of being on the one hand and of the voidness (*śūnyatā*) of being on the other. However, the empirical and the non-empirical realms are not co-existent in all respects from the beginning in the mundane world, although admittedly the *Karikā* state quite cryptically that in the ultimate sense the *saṃsāric* and *nirvāṇic* realms are identical (XXV, 19, 20). One can only see reality and relate it from the empirical (*saṃvṛti*) standpoint, to be sure, but this standpoint requires a relentless discursive analysis of the mind and its functions. It is basically an exercise in divesting the mind of its own prejudices or attachment to mental elements in the structurally enslaved sense. Though existence is on the flow at all times, the mind and its objects seemingly are not. The mind freezes or staticizes the object of perception without being cognizant of itself and its functions as being nothing but "waves" (i.e., visible markings) in the normal flow of existence. How can one reconcile the duality of the mind, i.e., one side as real and the other relatively unreal? This, of course, is the crucial point and the ultimate message of the Buddhist philosophy of non-self (*anātman*), non-permanence (*anitya*) and the universal nature of the hindrance-ridden being (*duḥkha*). Passage or flow of existence means that there is no objectifying or entifying of the mind itself and its objects of perception. Thus any concept (*dṛṣṭi*) viewed abstractly is taken to task and brought to its ultimate idiocy or self-contradiction.

Due to the relentless attack on any and all concepts the Mādhyamika is sometimes referred to as the philosophy of no-position. Indeed, even Candrakīrti in his *Prasannapadā* (p. 19.1–19.7) makes this comment, i.e., the Mādhyamika has no counter-thesis to offer because that would entail yet another position. In the *Vigrahavyā-*

vartanī (verse 29), Nāgārjuna himself admits that he has no views or theses to offer and therefore he must be absolved of all errors.

All this points to one thing: that the reality of things is not bound to logical or conceptual understanding. Reality or human experience lends itself to symbolism but to that extent it must be understood that symbolic references are strictly speaking deficient of ultimate reality. To exhibit this fact is the tenor of the whole of the *Kārikā*. This spirit is quite aptly demonstrated in the early remarks by Candrakīrti that any reality or any experience due to relational origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*), if characterizable at all, will have to be in the following negative terms:

> Non-extinction, non-origination, non-destruction, non-eternal
> (*anirodham anutpādam anucchedam aśāśvataṃ*)
> Non-identity, non-differentiation, non-coming into being, non-going out of being
> (*anekārtham anānārtham anāgamaṃ anirgamaṃ*)

These are known popularly as the Eight Negations or the Eight-Noes (八不). But they are not another set of conceptions expressed in mere negative terms; rather they are expressions of the reality of the nature of things in relational origination and, as expressions, they only point to the limits of reason, indirectly exhibiting the fact that the negative terms are only expressive of a positive content to the nature of things. In other words, since relational origination is at all times dynamically involved, no positive static view of reality as such (*tattva*) is grasped and thus the negative expressions only aid in "narrowing down" or "squeezing reality" to the point of giving the reader a microscopic view of the dynamic flow of existence.

The Buddhists have gone beyond the "either or" logic since it only operates within the realm of reason. They were interested in a more inclusive way of accommodating the whole of man's experiential process. They came up with the four possibles (*catuṣkoṭikā*) in viewing every aspect of reality. That is to say, for example,

one could assert (1) being (*bhava*), (2) not being (*abhava*), (3) both being and not being, and (4) neither being nor not being. This is certainly exhaustive of the treatment of reality, whether of the physical or mental nature or both at once. Nāgārjuna utilizes this type of logical view of things throughout the *Kārikā*. It should be cautioned that though the *Kārikā* at times seem to be positing logical entities, in reality, they are pointing at ontological entities or statuses. (Confer, for example, Chapter XXVII on the Examination of Dogmatic Views.)

Thus Nāgārjuna at the very outset, sets forth to show the logical ways in which common intellects tend to view reality. However, they are unmindful of the four relational conditions describing the dynamic flow of nature, i.e., causal component (*hetu-pratyaya*), objective component (*ālambana-pratyaya*), sequential component (*samanantara-pratyaya*), and dominant component (*ādhipateya* or *adhipati-pratyaya*). These refer to the contingent conditions involved in the continuity of being. As the continuity (*saṃtāna*) is a fact of nature, no thing or experience can be analyzed into steadfast existential factors as such. If it were analyzable, there would be no production from self (*svatah*), from other (*paratah*), from both self and other, or from neither, i.e., without a cause (*ahetu*). Nāgārjuna then will criticize any positing of permanent entities from this two-fold sense, i.e., that, first of all, reality is contingently formed (*hetu-pratyaya-apekṣa*) and, secondly, there can be no reference at all to reality being characterized as extinction, origination, destruction, eternal, etc. (the opposite of the Eight-Noes) within this contingent framework.

The spirit of Nāgārjuna has been kept intact and transmitted to us by way of diverse lands and languages. In this respect, the Chinese contribution is tremendously large. Foremost, of course, is Kumārajīva's *Chung-lun* which is based on Piṅgala's now lost Sanskrit commentary of the *Kārikā*. This translation work is the forerunner of the Śūnyavāda movement in China, starting with such

men as Seng-chao (384–414) and Tao-sheng (360–434) and continuing on to Chi-tsang (549–623). The latter's monumental work, *San-lun-hsüan-i* (三論玄義), (*Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, XXXXV, No. 1852) is greatly responsible for the establishment of Śūnyavāda thought in China and later in Japan. Special attention must be called to his famous two-fold analytical division of the ideas of the *Kārikā*, i.e., into the famous *p'o-hsieh-hsien-cheng* (破邪顯正) which can be rendered as refutation (or critique) is at once an awakening to the true dharma or reality as such. The influence of this thought on subsequent Far Eastern Buddhism cannot be underestimated.

The present translation is made especially with the view of furthering a philosophic perspective and understanding of the key terms and concepts. Although, in the strictest sense, there is no absolute and direct analysis of anything including human experiential process, a truism as old as the original teachings of the historical Buddha, it is true that man is constantly involved in assigning provisional status (*prapañca*) to any subject or object under review. And, in spite of this, he struggles to seek some measure of understanding. Bearing this in mind, it was felt justifiable, in the case of a few verses, to leave the original Sanskrit terms untranslated, especially with such terms as *śūnya* and *śūnyatā*, since no English equivalent could be found. Moreover, it was thought that it would spare the reader from being misled or from forming certain prejudices against Buddhism at the outset. It seems that the frequency of exposure to such key terms might promote their currency sooner and at the same time improve Buddhist understanding in the original sense.

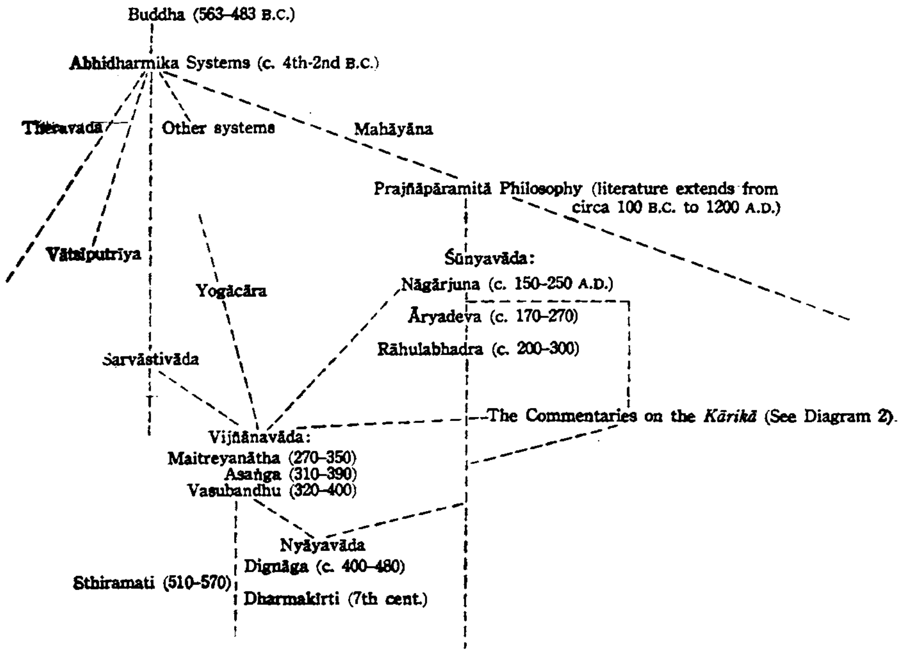
Despite Nāgārjuna's strong indictment against Abhidharmic interpretation in the opening chapter, the reader should constantly be wary of falling into any approach which might lead to simple or naive type of realism or even a simple metaphysical understanding of man and world throughout the rest of the chapters. All terms and concepts are always relatable or correspondent with any and all

aspects of man's experience. Thus, for example, the term, *dharma*, is strictly a human experiential factor, heavily mental or concomitant with mental process to be sure, but it has no reference to the physical nature of things as such. It is still man who makes the interpretation of nature possible, although he cannot deny the surroundings to which he is constantly and contingently related and from which he must dynamically draw upon for his own existence.

In virtue of the scarcity of literature on the Buddhist movements in India proper and elsewhere, it is rather difficult to piece together a clear and accurate picture of the lineage of the Śūnyavāda. However, in order to show some semblance of ideological continuity in the Mahāyāna, the following two diagrams are attached. The first is a general sketch starting from the historical Buddha and showing the prominent schools in their relative chronological places. The second is a more minute and larger scheme of the commentaries made on the *Kārikā*. As noted earlier, eight commentaries were allegedly made, including Nāgārjuna's own, but if the work of Piṅgala and Asaṅga (both existing only in the Chinese) were added, the number would total ten. The texts (in Italics) refer to either commentaries or important works in Sanskrit or Chinese which continue the Śūnyavāda thought. Only five of the commentaries are identified in the Sanskrit. And, finally, particular attention should be made with respect to the close affinity of the Śūnyavāda and the Vijñānavāda. In diagram 2, for example, Asaṅga, Sthiramati, Guṇamati, Dharmapāla and Hsüan-tsang all belong to the Vijñānavāda tradition.

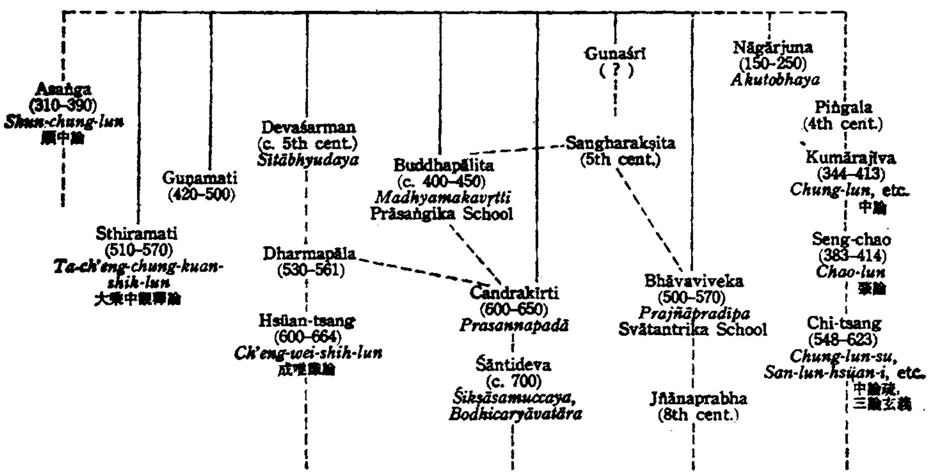
Synoptic View of Indian Buddhist Development

Diagram 1



The Commentaries on the *Kārikā*

Diagram 2



NOTES

1. Consult Edward Conze: *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature* (Mouton & Co., 'S-Gravenhage, 1960) for the most exhaustive treatment of this genre of Buddhist literature made recently.
2. A concise treatment is made by E. J. Thomas in his *The History of Buddhist Thought* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Lt., 1953 reprint), Appendix II, pp. 288–292.
3. *Śāriputra-abhidharma-sāstra* (舍利佛阿毘曇論) *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, XXVIII, N. 1548, a work which remains only in the Chinese and belongs to an unknown Abhidharma school.
4. Confer, op. cit.; Thomas, Appendix I, pp. 274–276 for the comparison of the sets.
5. The most systematic treatment of the Sarvāstivāda 75 *dharma*-theory was done by Th. Stcherbatsky in his *The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of Dharma*, (reprinted by Susil Gupta, Ltd., India, 1956). This is a formidable volume, perhaps one of his best early works in pioneering of Buddhist thought, but it must be read with certain understanding and a critical eye.
6. The 75 *dharmas* for Sarvāstivāda, 89 for Theravāda, 100 for Vijñānavāda and 84 for Satyasiddhi.
7. Warren, Henry Clarke: *Buddhism in Translation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1896. p. 116. After nearly 75 years since its publication, this work still remains one of the outstanding translation projects done on the Theravāda tradition. The selections are excellent and their translations are done with rare insight and understanding. However, it should be noted that such phrases as the above do manifest dangerous implications.
8. Op. cit.; *Central Conception*. pp. 19, 23, 24, 57, 62. This interpretation is carried on in his later monumental work, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna* (Leningrad: Publication Office of the Academy of Science of the USSR, 1927) and also in the two-volume *Buddhist Logic* (Leningrad: Publishing Office of the Academy of Science of the USSR, 1930).
9. Ibid.; p. 63.
10. For example, another worthy Buddhist scholar, T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 19:6) faithfully follows Stcherbatsky in giving the radical pluralistic interpretation to the Sarvāstivāda. Confer, pp. 69–76. Ashok Kumar Chatterjee in his *The Yogācāra Idealism* (Varanasi: Banaras Hindu University 1962) voices the same realistic interpretation that "all dharmas are accepted as objectively real," and concludes that the Sarvāstivāda is "critical realism." Confer, p. 3. A most recent work by K. Venkata Ramanan, *Nāgārjuna's Philosophy*, as presented in the *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā-śāstra* (Tokyo: Charles

E. Tuttle Company, Inc., 1966) follows the same line of pluralistic interpretation. Confer, pp. 57–62. Edward Conze also carries a similar theme in his scholarly work, *Buddhist Thought in India* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1962). Confer especially pp. 138–141 where he labels Sarvāstivāda as "pan-realism."

At least one contemporary Indian Buddhist scholar, Vishwanath Prasad Varma, has taken exception to Stcherbatsky's radical pluralistic interpretation in which he "traces the concept of Dharma as vital essential super-subtle elements in the Kaṭhopanishad," and Varma concludes, "there is no validity for interpreting the word Dharma or Dhamma as occurring in the Pali literature as element." Confer, V. P. Varma: "The Upanishads and the Origins of Buddhism," (*The Journal of the Bihar Research Society;* Buddha Jayanti Special Issue, Vol. II, 1956. pp. 372–394). p. 373 and footnote 6.

11. *Pali-English Dictionary.* Published by the Pali Text Society, 1921–25. Ed. by T. W. Rhys Davids & William Stede. p. 126 under S.
12. The famous simile of the man who, wounded by a poison arrow, refuses treatment and interminably asks questions on the origin, maker, archer, etc. of that arrow, gives the clearest example of "committing to the flames" matters which have no immediate empirical concern. Confer *Majjhima Nikāya*; Discourse 63, *Cūḷa-Māluṅkyasutta.*
13. It would seem that later developments in esoteric tantrism in India and Tibet are forms which are so vastly different from original Buddhism that they cannot be considered true Buddhism although they have carried the name of Buddhism geographically to other countries and chronologically up to the present. They are, strictly speaking, deviations which speeded Buddhist degeneration into the impure realm. But Buddhism and Buddhist doctrines have the trait of being amenable to changes in all respects and this might be looked upon as supportive of the unique feature of simplicity and profundity co-existing, a feature which made it possible for Buddhism to become one of the leading religious forces of Asia.
14. Besides the bulky *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras*, some of the pre-Nāgārjuna works, without ascertainment of rightful authorship but written presumably by men of the highest caliber, are the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika Sūtra, Srīmāladevisiṅhanāda Sūtra, Vimalakīrtinirdeṣa Sūtra, Avataṃsaka Sūtra, Suvarṇaprabhaṣa Sūtra* and *Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra.*
15. It is true that Nāgārjuna and his tradition were criticized for being nihilistic (*nāstika*) by contemporaries but this criticism was off the mark for, on simple grounds, no Buddhist system or school would advance the utter destruction of the individual unless it is a deviated form which of course Śūnyavāda cannot be identified with. Recently, an Indian scholar Harsh Narain attempts to prove that the Śūnyavāda is "absolute nihilism rather than a form of Absolutism or Absolutistic monism." (Śūnyavāda:

A Reinterpretation." *Philosophy East and West*, XIII, 4 [January 1964, p. 311-338.]) Though Narain argues deftly with many references to support his claim, there still remains the big question whether his reinterpretation is just another linguistic reinterpretation of the basic term, *śūnyatā*, in its various usages.

16. E. J. Thomas says that "The Buddhist thinkers had without realizing it stumbled upon the fact that the terms of ordinary language do not express the real facts of existence. Words are static, but not the objects to which they refer. The contradictions were attributed not to the defects of verbal expression, but to the nature of the experience." (*The History of Buddhist Thought*; op. cit. p. 218.

    It might be added here that one aspect of the doctrine of indeterminacy or inexpressibility (*avyākṛta*) is to exhibit the impossibility of presenting *realistically* in written or unwritten forms any metaphysical (ergo symbolic) references to the world or to human experiences. And pushed further, the doctrine reminds us to know the limits of discriminative knowledge (*vijñāna*) but, at the same time, to seek within it the way to non-discriminative knowledge (*nirvikalpa-jñāna, prajñā*).

17. The so-called idealistic tradition in the Mahāyāna, i.e., the Yogācāra-vijñānavāda tradition, has been subjected to an interpretation which is much too mental or conceptual and consequently overplayed. The *ālaya-vijñāna*, for example, has been assigned to the mind as a storehouse of mental seeds without giving due credit or emphasis to the "physical" housing in which it must function. The interplay of the eight *vijñānas* ("consciousnesses") and the *bijas* ("seeds") is subtle but cannot be explained away as mere ideational process.

    In this connection, it should be pointed out that C. H. Hamilton's pioneering translation work, *Wei Shih Er Shih Lun* 唯識二十論 or *The Treatise in Twenty Stanzas on Representation-only* by Vasubandhu (*American Oriental Society*, New Haven, Connecticut, 1938; Reprint by Kraus Reprint Corppration, N. Y. 1967), has generated a strict subjective or idealistic interpretation of the Vijñānavāda. But this interpretation is definitely incorrect. J. Takakusu has also contributed, inadvertently perhaps, to this erroneous view by coining the phrases, "mere-ideation" and "ideation-only" for the Sanskrit term, *vijñaptimātra*, or for the Chinese, *wei-shih*. (*The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1947. Chapter VI). To be sure, there is no English equivalent of the term which would not be criticized. However, any phrase attached to the term must be amply qualified when employed.

    The outer realm of perception (*viṣaya, wai-ching* 外境) is not referring to "external objects" nor even with respect to any "objects" of perception. It is a generic term for the total external realm involved in the perceptual process. But, as the treatise states, very clearly, the so-called "consciousness-only" (*vijñaptimātra wei-shih* 唯識) is inviolably bound

with the outer realm (*viṣaya*) and yet, in the strict sense, it is not the result of any so-called "external objects" nor is it responsible for the existence of the "objects" themselves. See especially verses XIII-XVI of Hamilton's work.

18. This negativistic theme is carried out by A. B. Keith in his monumental and influential work, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1923). He says, "In the Madhyamaka...the absolute truth is a negativism or doctrine of vacuity (*śūnyatā*), established by the application to the ideas accepted by the Hīnayāna as absolute truth of a logic which insists that any contradiction is an infallible proof of error, and which finds contradiction in every conception, and determining *a priori* what is impossible, denies its existence on that ground in the face of facts." (p. 235) Further on, he goes on to say, "Nāgārjuna denies consistently that he has any thesis of his own, for to uphold one would be wholly erroneous; the truth is silence, which is neither affirmation nor negation, for negation in itself is essentially positive in implying a reality. He confines himself to reducing every positive assertion to absurdity, thus showing that the intellect condemns itself as inadequate just as it finds hopeless antinomies in the world of experience." (p. 239).

19. Literally and generally speaking, the opposite of *duḥkha* is *sukha* which means the agreeable, pleasant, easeful, wholesome state of being. In this sense, *sukha* is readily attainable by all if proper livelihood is led but it should never be identified with the final goal, *nirvāṇa*, although the latter presupposes the accomplishment of the former.

20. There is close resemblance, to be sure, between the two types of relativity doctrine, one Buddhistic and the other scientific, but it is doubtful whether one side can successfully be translated over to the other with all the implications therein. It seems that there is a basic difference in the scientific and pre-scientific use of the term. One side is basically physical or mechanistic and therefore largely deterministic, while the other is organic or ontological in nature and therefore inclusive of deterministic and non-deterministic factors. It will be seen that Nāgārjuna, in Chapter I, demonstrates the untenability of strict causality, causal elements, and causal connection, and thus hints at "other" approaches to the understanding of reality (*tattva*).

In all of his major works, Stcherbatsky goes to the extent of using capitals on the translation of *pratītyasamutpāda* as Relativity or the Principle of Relativity, and thereby implicitly promotes a kind of monism. It is interesting to note that T. R. V. Murti in a work cited earlier follows Stcherbatsky's interpretation quite freely and even ends with (or aims at) a strictly Vedāntic (monistic) picture of the Mādhyamika.

21. The best case on this is represented by T. R. V. Murti in his previously cited work, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*. Confer especially pages

47–54. While on page 9, he extends to the historical Buddha the honor of being the first dialectician in the world.

22. In the subsequent translations the reader should be able to judge for himself whether logic or dialectic is used consistently to educe truth or the nature of ultimate reality (*tattva*), or even emptiness (*śūnyatā*) of being.

23. Murti talks about the "Conflict of Reason," "Criticism," or "reflective awareness of things," as the dialectical import of the Mādhyamika *prasaṅga* doctrine (*reductio ad absurdum*) but whether *prasaṅga* is really a method for educing truth or only a method of criticism is a moot question. Perhaps, it is neither and that the whole tenor of the Mādhyamika might actually be to tax reason only to its discriminative limits and thereby render clear the absurdity of adhering to the discriminated objectified elements. Beyond that it might only be either sheer speculation on the function of reason or a case of reading in too much. It might he added that, in Buddhism as a whole, there is no logic (rational play) without reference to the ontological nature of things. In short, no logic without ontology.

24. He commented on the *Pañcaviṁśatisāhasrikā Prajnāpāramitā* (The 25,000 Verse Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra). His commentary work in turn is known as the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā Śāstra* but is only extant in the Chinese as the *Ta-chih-tu-lun* (大智度論 *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, XXV, No. 1509)

25. Both extremes or their perceptual contents or elements thereof are identical after all on the level of objectification and with respect to the subsequent clinging action. This is one important aspect of the middle path which has not been given due attention by not a few scholars.

The Translation of the
Mūlamadhyamakakārikā of Nāgārjuna
with
the Sanskrit kārikā romanized

CHAPTER I

Pratyaya parīkṣā

Examination of Relational Condition

The term, *pratyaya*, has been variously rendered as *yin-yüan* (因緣) by Kumārajīva, as causality by Stcherbatsky, as *Bedingungen* by Walleser. All three renditions, it must be stated, do not do complete justice to the Sanskrit original but there is a feeling that all three translators have sensed the significance of the term and concluded with the best possible term under their command in conveying the idea. This is just an example of how difficult it is to translate an original idea into another language, a difficulty which is doubly so when the term is a philosophical concept.

We may perhaps venture to say at the outset that the term ought to be shorn of any notion of "cause" or "causality" as commonly interpreted. These notions would immediately set up a causal connection such that an effect or something is originated or produced out of something else. In other words, they would connote a one-to-one, cause-effect, occurrence of events which is definitely not the true intention of the Mādhyamika. For this reason, it is proposed, not without shortcomings either, to coin the phrase, "relational condition," in which the adjective, "relational" refers to the ontological representation of an event or subject as related to the whole situation, whether significantly or not, in a certain moment; while the noun, "condition," refers to the state of such an event or subject at that particular moment. Thus, relational condition does reflect somewhat the modern idea of a four-dimensional view of events in nature but the comparison can never be completely carried out because the former has a pre-scientific origin while the latter a strictly Western scientific base.

The chapter then discusses the important concept of *pratyaya* or relational condition. Nāgārjuna immediately ties it in with the problem of origination or how experiential events come forth. He asserts emphatically that events or entities (a term synonymously used in reference to a unity of human experience) are never known or found to originate out of themselves, from others, from both themselves and others, and from the absence of causes (verse 1). Following fundamental Buddhist principles, he points out that four and only four types of relational condition are permissible, i.e. primary causal (*hetu*), appropriating or objectively extending (*ālambana*), sequential or contiguous (*anantara*), and dominantly extending (*ādhipateya*) (verse 3). But then, keeping in mind the concepts of being (*sat*) and non-being (*asat*), he methodically analyzes the play of relational conditions in order to exhibit the inner contradiction or utter absurdity of premising anything in the entified form.

In such a way this chapter serves as an introduction to the rest of the chapters because the method or line of argument used recurs over and over again, almost *ad nauseam*. However, the reader must constantly keep in mind that the basic aim of Nāgārjuna is to reveal the fact that experiential events are always in the nature of relational origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*). And, very early in a dedicatory verse, Nāgārjuna sings praise to the Buddha's supreme teaching of relational origination. The verse contains the famous Eight-Noes or Negations which indirectly point at the blissful realm of existence. It expresses the whole philosophy of Mādhyamika in a nutshell and thus could well be labelled the Mādhyamika Creed.

anirodhamanutpādamanucchedamaśāśvataṃ/
anekārthamanānārthamanāgamamanirgamaṃ//
yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaṃ prapañcopaśamaṃ śivaṃ/
deśayāmāsa saṃbuddhastaṃ vande vadatāṃ varaṃ//

I pay homage to the Fully Awakened One,
the supreme teacher who has taught
the doctrine of relational origination,
the blissful cessation of all phenomenal thought constructions.
(Therein, every event is "marked" by):
non-origination, non-extinction,
non-destruction, non-permanence,
non-identity, non-differentiation
non-coming (into being), non-going (out of being).

Verse 1

na svato nāpi parato na dvābhyāṃ nāpyahetutaḥ/
utpannā jātu vidyante bhāvāḥ kvacana ke cana//

At nowhere and at no time can entities ever exist by originating out of themselves, from others, from both (self-other), or from the lack of causes.

Verse 2

catvāraḥ pratyayā hetuścālambanamanantaraṃ/
tathaivādhipateyaṃ ca pratyayo nāsti pañcamaḥ//

There are four and only four relational conditions; namely primary causal, appropriating or objectively extending, sequential or contiguous, and dominantly extending conditions. There is no fifth.

Note: Stcherbatsky asserts that the classification into four varieties belongs to the Sarvāstivādins and that it is supplemented by a further classification into six different *hetus*, which probably are later than Nāgārjuna, since they are not mentioned by him. (*The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*; p. 164, fn. 6) On the other hand, S. Yamaguchi points out that the *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣāśāstra*, chuan 16 (阿毘達磨大毘婆論, 巻十六) makes reference to the fact Nāgārjuna is only trying to understand the method of the Sarvāstivādins regarding their claim of the transmission of the true teachings of the Buddha. He further indicates that the four *pratyayas* also occur in the *Madhyamakāvatāra* (入中論). Thus there is no direct connection with the theory of six *hetus*. (Confer Yamaguchi, S.: *Prasannapadā nāma Mādhyamikavṛttiḥ of Candrakirti*. 淨明句論と名ずくる月稱造中論釋. Japanese translation with critical notations. Tokyo: Kōbundō Shobō, 1947 (Vol. I), 1949 (Vol. II); Vol. 1, p. 116, note 6).

Verse 3

na hi svabhāvo bhāvānāṃ pratyayādiṣu vidyate/
avidyamāne svabhāve parabhāvo na vidyate//

In these relational conditions the self-nature of the entities cannot exist. From the non-existence of self-nature, other-nature too cannot exist.

Verse 4

kriyā na pratyayavatī nāpratyayavatī kriyā/
pratyayā nākriyāvantaḥ kriyāvantaśca santyuta//

The functional force does not inhere relational conditions, nor does it not inhere them. The relational conditions, vice versa, do not inhere the functional force, nor do they not inhere it.

Verse 5

utpadyate pratītyemānitīme pratyayāḥ kila/
yāvanotpadyata ime tāvannāpratyayāḥ kathaṃ//

Only as entities are uniquely related and originated can they be described in terms of relational conditions. For, how can non-relational conditions be asserted of entities which have not come into being?

Verse 6

naivāsato naiva sataḥ pratyayo 'rthasya yujyate/
Asataḥ pratyayaḥ kasya sataśca pratyayena kiṃ//

Relational condition does not validly belong to either being or non-being. If it belongs to being, for what use is it? And if to non-being, for whose use is it?

Verse 7

na sannāsanna sadasandharmo nirvartate yadā/
kathaṃ nirvartako heturevaṃ sati hi yujyate//

When a factor of experience does not evolve from being, non-being, nor from both being and non-being, how can there be an effectuating cause? Thus (such) a cause is not permissible.

Note: This verse treats the concept of the primary causal condition (*hetu-pratyaya*)

Verse 8

anālambana evāyaṃ san dharma upadiśyate/
athānālambane dharme kuta ālambanaṃ punaḥ//

It is said that a true factor of experience does not have an appropriating or objectively extending relational condition. If it does not exist, then again, wherein is this type of relational condition?

Note: *Ālambana* is normally translated as the object of cognition but here it hardly seems applicable to the concept of *dharma* (factor of experience).

Verse 9

anutpanneṣu dharmeṣu nirodho nopapadyate/
nānantaramato yuktaṃ niruddhe pratyayaśca kaḥ//

It is not possible to have extinction where factors of experience have not yet arisen. In an extinguished state, for what use is a relational condition? Thus the sequential or contiguous relational condition is not applicable.

Verse 10

bhāvānāṃ niḥsvabhāvānāṃ na sattā vidyate yataḥ/
satīdamasmin bhavatītyetannaivopapadyate//

As entities without self-nature have no real status of existence, the statement, "from the existence of that this becomes," is not possible.

Note: This verse treats the concept of the dominantly extending relational conditional (*adhipati-pratyaya*). Stecherbatsky interprets the Sankrit phrase, *satīdam asmin bhavatīti*, as the formula for the twelve-fold causal chain as found in the Nikāyas. However, Ryotai Hatani points out as a note to this particular verse that the phrase is not to be restricted to the general formula on causation but should simply mean the significance of the existence of one entity from another. (Confer Hatani, R.: *Sanronkaidai-to-honyaku* 三論解題と翻譯 [Sanron and their Translations with critical notations]); in *Kokuyaku Issaikyō*, Chūgan-bu, 國譯一切經,

中觀部 Vol. 1. Tokyo: Daitō Shuppan-sha 1930). To be operative, the fourth cause (*adhipati-pratyaya*) must assume the existence of an entity. However, Nāgārjuna's fundamental standpoint is that of the non-self-nature (*niḥsvabhāva*) of an entity and therefore rules out any imputation of a causal or relational connection of entities in a one-to-one manner.

Verse 11

na ca vyastasamasteṣu pratyayeṣvasti tatphalaṃ/
pratyayebhyaḥ kathaṃ tacca bhavenna pratyayeṣu yat//

The effect (i.e., arisen entity) does not exist separated from relational condition nor together in relational condition. If it does not exist in either situation, how could it arise out of relational conditions?

Verse 12

athāsadapi tattebhyaḥ pratyayebhyaḥ pravartate/
apratyayebhyo 'pi kasmānnābhipravartate phalaṃ//

Now then, if non-entity arises from these relational conditions, why is it not possible that the effect (i.e., arisen entity) cannot arise from non-relational conditions?

Verse 13

phalaṃ ca pratyayamayaṃ pratyayāścāsvayaṃmayāḥ/
phalamasvamayebhyo yattatpratyayamayaṃ kathaṃ//

The effect (i.e., arisen entity) has the relational condition but the relational conditions have no self-possessing (natures). How can an effect, arising from no self-possessing (natures), have the relational condition?

Verse 14

tasmānna pratyayamayaṃ nāpratyayamayaṃ phalaṃ/
Saṃvidyate phalābhāvātpratyayāpratyayāḥ kutaḥ//

Consequently, the effect (i.e., arisen entity) is neither with relational nor without non-relational condition. Since the effect has no existing status, wherein are the relational and non-relational conditions?

CHAPTER II

Gatāgata parīkṣā

Examination of What Has and What Has Not Transpired

As the title suggests, this chapter is an examination of what is known to have transpired or gone (*gata*) and what is known not to have transpired or gone (*agata*). There is a temptation to translate the Sanskrit terms as simply the past and the future respectively, but on critical reading of the *Kārikā* the argument centers on the idea of a past (transpired moment) and does not justify any assertion of a future in the ordinary sense. In developing the argument, however, the use of another term is necessitated in relating *gata* with *agata*. This term is *gamyamāna* or the passing away in or from the present. The Chinese version, i.e., Kumārajīva's translation, is very accurate in rendering the above terms as *i-ch'ü* 已去 (*gata*), *wei-ch'ü* 未去 (*agata*), and *ch'ü-shih* 去時 (*gamyamāna*, also rendered as *hsien-ch'ü* 現去). The usage reveals that the Chinese character *ch'ü* 去 appears in all three, which shows the care and skill employed in adhering to the central concept of the movement into the past. Thus the above terms are respectively translated as "that which has transpired or passed (*gata*)," "that which has not transpired or passed (*agata*)," and "present passing away (*gamyamāna*)."

The argument in the present chapter is undoubtedly addressed to those who maintain the idea of an individuality in things (the (*pudgalavādins*) such as the case was with the Saṃmitīya and the Vātsīputrīya. The division of passage or movement (*gati*, *gamana*) in time is refuted on the grounds that to assert any one of the three moments does not necessitate the introduction of any of the other two terms. The chapter is a necessary sequence in the development of the doctrine of *pratītyasamutpāda* set forth in the opening chapter

and it also engenders the mood and pattern for the critical analysis of the opponent's views expressed in the remaining chapters.

Verse 1

gataṃ na gamyate tāvadagataṃ naiva gamyate/
gatāgatavinirmuktaṃ gamyamānaṃ na gamyate//

Indeed, that which has transpired does not come to pass nor does that which has not transpired. Separated from these (gatāgata), the present passing away cannot be known.

Note: S. Yamaguchi enlightens us that the final "*na gamyate*" refers to the fact that a certain condition is unknowable or inconceivable. Cf., his translation of *Prasannapadā*, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 144, notes 7 and 13.

Verse 2 (The opponent contends)

ceṣṭā yatra gatistatra gamyamāne ca sā yataḥ/
na gate nāgate ceṣṭā gamyamāne gatistataḥ//

Where there is movement, there is passage. There is movement also in the present passing away but not in that which has transpired nor in that which has not transpired. Thus passage must reside in the present passing away.

Verse 3 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

gamyamānasya gamanaṃ kathaṃ nāmopapatsyate/
gamyamānaṃ hy agamanaṃ yadā naivopapadyate//

Indeed, how is it possible for the present passing away to have a coming to pass? For, it is not possible for the present passing away to be without a coming to pass.

Note: The second part of the Sanskrit original reads: *gamyamāne dvigamanaṃ yadā naivopadadyate.* De La Vallée Poussin, however, makes a notation (*op. cit.*, p. 94, note 2) to the effect that, according to the Tibetan version, this part should read: *gamyamānam hy agamanaṃ yadā naivopadadyate.* Both Ryōtai Hatani and Hakuju Ui note in their respective Japanese translations that the *Akutobhaya* (*Wu-wei-lun* 無畏論), *Prajñā-pradīpa* (*Pan-jo-te'ng-lun* 般若燈論), *Ta-ch'eng-chung-kuan-shih-lun* (大乘中觀釋論) and

Pingala's version as translated by Kumārajīva into Chinese (*Chung-lun* 中論), all refer to the latter reading. I have adopted Ui's method of changing the Sanskrit original into its more acceptable form. Ui goes on to say that the changes in the Sanskrit original attest to the fact that a few revisions had been made in later centuries. (Confer Hakuju Ui's work in *Kokuyaku Daizōkyō*, Rombu Vol. V, 國譯大藏經, 論部, 巻五 Tokyo: Kokumin Bunko Kankōkai, 1921. p. 19).

Verse 4

gamyamānasya gamanaṃ yasya tasya prasajyate/
ṛte gatergamyamānaṃ gamyamānaṃ hi gamyate//

The assertion that the present passing away has a coming to pass results in a fallacy that the former can be without the latter. However, the present passing away does come to pass.

Verse 5

gamyamānasya gamane prasaktaṃ gamanadvayaṃ
yena tadgamyamānaṃ ca yaccātra gamanaṃ punaḥ//

There are two aspects of coming to pass inherent in the passage of the present passing away. That is, one (which gives substance) to the present passing away and the other which is the coming to pass itself.

Note: Yamaguchi renders *prasakta* as fallacy; thus his translation from the Japanese would read: "There is a fallacy of asserting two kinds of coming to pass . . ." (cf. *op. cit.* his translation, p. 150) This is not without merits for it clarifies the position that Nāgārjuna takes.

Verse 6

dvau gantārau prasajyete prasakte gamanadvaye/
gantāraṃ hi tiraskṛtya gamanaṃ nopapadyate//

If the two aspects of coming to pass (are admitted), then there follow two kinds of passing (i.e., transpiring) entities. For, a passing away which is devoid of a passing entity does not take place.

Verse 7

gantāraṃ cettiraskṛtya gamanaṃ nopapadyate/
gamane 'sati gantātha kuta eva bhaviṣyati//

If now the coming to pass which is devoid of a passed entity does not take place, then, in turn, where will the passing entity be without the coming to pass?

Verse 8

gantā na gacchati tāvadagantā naiva gacchati/
anyo ganturagantuśca kastṛtīyo hi gacchati//

Indeed, a passing entity does not come to pass and neither does a non-passing entity. Apart from these, how could there be a third (type of) entity coming to pass?

Note: A non-passing entity (*agantṛ*) refers to an entity which is not involved in the coming to pass process.

Verse 9

gantā tāvadgacchatīti kathamevopatsyate/
gamanena vinā gantā yadā naivopapadyate//

Indeed, how is it (possible) for a passing entity to come to pass when, separated from a coming to pass, a passing entity does not take place?

Verse 10

pakṣo gantā gacchatīti yasya tasya prasajyate/
gamanena vinā gantā ganturgamanamicchataḥ//

If it is asserted that a passing entity comes to pass then a fallacy would result in that the entity could be separated from the coming to pass. (And yet) a passing entity requires the (condition of) passing away.

Verse 11

gamane dve prasajyete gantā yadyuta gacchati/
ganteti cocyate yena gantā sanyacca gacchati//

If again it is asserted that the passing entity comes to pass then (another) fallacy would result in two types of coming to

pass. One type would exhibit the fact of a passing entity and the other the coming to pass in virtue of being a passing entity.

Note: Ui indicates that the Sanskrit term, *cocyate* (to be named), is *cojyate* (to be exhibited) in the Tibetan version. And although the Chinese is not clear on this point, he prefers to follow the Tibetan. (*op. cit. Kokuyaku Daizōkyō.* Vol. V; p. 22, note 63). I have followed his suggestion.

Verse 12

gate nārabhyate gantuṃ gantaṃ nārabhyate 'gate/
nārabhyate gamyamāne gantumārabhyate kuha//

There is no commencing of passing away in that which has transpired nor in that which has not transpired. Neither is there a commencing in the present passing away. Wherein, then, does it commence (to pass away)?

Verse 13

na pūrvaṃ gamanārambhādgamyamānaṃ na vā gataṃ/
yatrārabhyeta gamanamagate gamanaṃ kutaḥ//

There is no present passing away prior to the commencement of coming to pass and also in that which has transpired. How could there be a commencement of coming to pass in that which has not transpired?

Verse 14

gataṃ kiṃ gamyamānaṃ kimagataṃ kiṃ vikalpyate/
adṛśyamāna ārambhe gamanasyaiva sarvathā//

As any form of the commencement of coming to pass cannot be seen, how could that which has transpired, the present passing away, and that which has not transpired be conceivable?

Verse 15

gantā na tiṣṭhati tāvadagantā naiva tiṣṭhati/
anyo ganturagantuśca kastṛtīyo 'tha tiṣṭhati//

Indeed, the passing entity nor the non-passing entity does not abide. How could there be a third entity, besides these, that abides?

Verse 16

gantā tāvattiṣṭhatīti kathamevopapatsyate/
gamanena vinā gantā yadā naivopapadyate//

Indeed, how is it (possible) for a passing entity to abide when, separated from a coming to pass, a passing entity does not take place?

Verse 17

na tiṣṭhati gamyamānānna gatānnāgatādapi/
gamanaṃ saṃpravṛttiśca nivṛttiśca gateḥ samā//

There is no abiding (nature) in the present passing away, in that which has transpired and in that which has not transpired. (Otherwise) the coming to pass, arising, and cessation would be identical with (the concept of) passage.

Verse 18

yadeva gamanaṃ gantā sa eveti na yujyate/
anya eva punargantā gateriti na yujyate//

It is not justifiable to say that the coming to pass is the same as the passing entity; nor is it justifiable to say that the passing entity is different from or alien to passage.

Verse 19

yadeva gamanaṃ gantā sa eva hi bhavedyadi/
ekībhāvaḥ prasajyeta kartuḥ karmaṇa eva ca//

If the coming to pass is identical with the passing entity, then (analogically) it would be the same as falling into the error of imputing a single character to the doer and his deed.

Verse 20

anya eva punargantā gateryadi vikalpyate/
gamanaṃ syādṛte ganturgantā syādgamanādṛte//

Again, if it is discriminatively thought that the passing entity is different from passage, then perhaps the passing entity could exist without a coming to pass and vice versa.

Verse 21

ekībhāvena vā siddhirnānābhāvena vā yayoḥ/
na vidyate tayoḥ siddhiḥ kathaṃ nu khalu vidyate//

As they (i.e., coming to pass and a passing entity) cannot possibly be established in terms of a single character nor of a different character, how could they be established at all?

Verse 22

gatyā yayocyate gantā gatiṃ tāṃ sa na gacchati/
yasmānna gatipūrvo 'sti kaścit kiṃ ciddhi gacchati//

The passing entity which is known or described by passage does not initiate the latter because it cannot exist prior to the latter. Yet, any entity somehow does come to pass.

Note: Ui enlightens us that although the Sanskrit is *yayocyate*, the Chinese and Tibetan versions correspond to *yayojyate* which is more correct insofar as the meaning is concerned. (*op. cit.*, pp. 27f, note 82).

Verse 23

gatyā yayocyate gantā tato'nyāṃ sa na gacchati/
gatī dve nopapadyete yasmādeke pragacchati//

The passing entity which is known or described by passage does not intiate a different kind of passage because in a single coming to pass there cannot possibly be two kinds of passage.

Note: See note on previous verse 22 for Ui's reference to *yayocyate* and *yayojyate*.

Verse 24

sadbhūto gamanaṃ gantā triprakāraṃ na gacchati/
nāsadbhūto 'pi gamanaṃ triprakāraṃ sa gacchati//

The real state of a passing entity does not initiate three kinds of coming to pass nor does its unreal state.

Note: The three kinds of coming to pass refer to those involved in (1) real state (*sadbhūta*), (2) unreal state (*asadbhūta*), and (3) both real and unreal state (*sadasadbhūta*.)

Verse 25

gamanaṃ sadasadbhūtaḥ triprakāraṃ na gacchati/
tasmādgatiśca gantā ca gantavyaṃ ca na vidyate//

Both the real and the unreal states (of the passing entity) do not initiate three kinds of coming to pass; therefore there are no passage, passing entity, and that which is to be transpired.

CHAPTER III

Cakṣurādīndriya parīkṣā

Examination of the Eye-faculty, etc.

This chapter deals with the field or sphere of action of the six sense organs. However, the line of thought in the discussion necessarily entails the understanding of the logic involved in the previous chapter. There we have seen that, strictly speaking, the three concepts of *gata*, *agata*, and *gamyamāna* cannot be maintained. In the present chapter Nāgārjuna takes up only the first of the six sense organs, i.e., the seeing activity, and demonstrates its non-possibility insofar as seeing itself and others are concerned because of basic objectification or attaching an unwarranted self-nature (*svabhāva*) to any activity.

Thus, it would follow that there is no seeing agent (draṣṭṛ) as such. In a similar fashion he assumes that he has demonstrated beyond doubt the non-possibility of imputing any "enduring" characteristic to the rest of the five sense organs, among which the mind is considered as the sixth sense organ.

Verse 1

darśanaṃ śravaṇaṃ ghrāṇaṃ rasanaṃ sparśanaṃ manaḥ/
indriyāṇi ṣaḍeteṣāṃ draṣṭavyādīni gocaraḥ//

> The six sense faculties are seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking. These have their respective fields of action, such as, what is to be seen, etc.

Verse 2 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

svamātmānaṃ darśanam hi tattameva na paśyati/
na paśyati yadātmānaṃ drakṣyati tatparān//

The seeing activity, indeed, does not see its own self. If it cannot see its own self, how is it possible to see other (things).

Verse 3

na paryāpto 'gnidṛṣṭānto darśanasya prasiddhaye/
sadarśanaḥ sa pratyukto gamyamānagatāgataiḥ//

The example of the fire (i.e., which burns material but does not burn itself) is not adequate enough to establish the seeing activity. The fire example and the seeing activity can be refuted (analogically) by the concepts of "present passing away," "that which has transpired," and "that which has not transpired."

Note: *Pratyukta* can be translated as refuted or answered.

Verse 4

nāpaśyamānaṃ bhavati yadā kiṃ cana darśanaṃ/
darśanam paśyatītyevaṃ kathametattu yujyate//

As a seeing activity which is presently not seeing is non-existent, how is it justifiable to speak of a seeing activity which sees?

Verse 5

paśyati darśanaṃ naiva naiva paśyatyadarśanaṃ/
vyākhyāto darśanenaiva draṣṭā cāpyupagamyatāṃ//

The seeing activity does not see nor does a non-seeing activity. Again, it must be admitted that the seeing agent which relies upon the seeing activity has already been explained.

Verse 6

tiraskṛtya draṣṭā nāstyatiraskṛtya ca darśanaṃ/
draṣṭavyaṃ darśanaṃ caiva draṣṭāryasati te kutaḥ//

The seeing agent does not exist whether it is with or without the seeing activity. Since it does not exist, where can the seeing activity and the object to be seen be?

Verse 7

pratītya mātāpitarau yathoktaḥ putrasaṃbhavaḥ/
cakṣūrūpe pratītyaivamukto vijñānasaṃbhavaḥ//

As it is said that a child is born out of the father and mother relationship, so also does consciousness arise from the bond between the eye and its material form.

Note: This verse is lacking in the *Akutobhaya, Prajñāpradīpa*, and the Chinese versions.

Verse 8

draṣṭavyadarśanābhavādvijñānādicatuṣṭayaṃ/
nāstīti upādānādīni bhaviṣyanti punaḥ kathaṃ//

From the non-existence of the seeing activity and the object to be seen, it follows that the four-fold consciousness, etc. (i.e., touch, sensation, desire) do not exist. How then, again, could it be possible for clinging action, etc., to arise?

Note: The four-fold matters refer to the sanskrit, *vijñāna, sāsrava-sparśa, vedanā* and *tṛṣṇā*.

Verse 9

vyākhyātaṃ śravaṇaṃ ghrāṇaṃ rasanaṃ sparśanaṃ manaḥ/
darśanenaiva jānīyācchrotṛśrotavyakādi ca//

Based on the discussion of the seeing activity, it is to be known that the functions of hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, thinking or the hearer and what is to be heard, etc., could be explained (in the same manner).

CHAPTER IV

Skandha parīkṣā

Examination of the Skandhas

With the same motive in mind as in previous chapters, i.e., to establish the impossibility of imputing either an enduring entity or characteristic, this chapter takes up the subject of the five skandhas (*rūpa, vedanā, samjñā, saṃskāra* and *vijñāna*). Again, as it was done in Chapter III, Nāgārjuna treats only the first of the five skandhas, i.e., *rūpa*, and assumes that the same line of argument can be cogently carried out with respect to the other four. He first states that it is inconceivable to say that *rūpa* can be separated from the Four Great Elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Wind) for these are after all concomitant causes for the rūpa's own being. On the other hand, the Four Great Elements cannot be thought of in the absence of *rūpa*. But all this does not mean that neither *rūpa* nor the elements cease to exist. Nāgārjuna is only trying to exhibit the fact that any concept or thing cannot be described by reference to a simple cause-effect relationship in order to establish its existential status.

Verse 1

rūpakāraṇanirmuktaṃ na rūpamupalabhyate/
rūpeṇāpi na nirmuktaṃ dṛśyate rūpakāraṇaṃ//

> Material form (*rūpa*) separated from the efficient cause (*kāraṇa*) cannot be conceived. Moreover, separated from material form the efficient cause cannot be seen.

Note: The causes are in reference to the Four Great Elements (*catvāri mahābhūtāni*): Earth, Water, Fire, and Wind.

Verse 2

rūpakāraṇanirmukte rūpe rūpaṃ prasajyate/
āhetukaṃ na cāstyarthaḥ kaścidāhetukaḥ kva cit//

If material form is separated from efficient cause, then it follows that form will be without a cause. However, nowhere is there a thing existing without a cause.

Verse 3

rūpena tu vinirmuktaṃ yadi syādrūpakāraṇaṃ/
akāryakaṃ kāraṇaṃ syāt nāstyakāryaṃ ca kāraṇaṃ//

Granted that separated from material form an efficient cause of form exists, then there will be a cause without an effect. But a cause without an effect (in reality) does no exist.

Verse 4

rūpe satyeva rūpasya kāraṇaṃ nopapadyate/
rūpe 'satyeva rūpasya kāraṇaṃ nopapadyate//

When material form exists, its cause is untenable. Moreover, even when material form does not exist, its cause is (likewise) untenable.

Verse 5

niṣkāraṇaṃ punā rūpaṃ naiva naivopapadyate/
tasmāt rūpagatān kāṃścinna vikalpān vikalpayet//

Again, material form without a cause definitely is untenable. Therefore, any material form which has been thought of (i.e., becomes a concept) should not (become the basis of) further conceptualization.

Verse 6

na kāraṇasya sadṛśaṃ kāryamityupapadyate/
na kāraṇasyāsadṛśaṃ kāryamityupapadyate//

It is untenable that the effect will resemble the efficient cause. Again, it is untenable that the effect will not resemble the efficient cause.

Verse 7

vedanācittasaṃjñānāṃ saṃskārāṇāṃ ca sarvaśaḥ/
sarveṣāmeva bhāvānāṃ rūpeṇaiva samaḥ kramaḥ//

Feeling, mind, awareness, volitional plays, and all existential actions can each be discussed in the same manner as material form.

Verse 8

vigrahe yaḥ parīhāraṃ kṛte śūnyatayā vadet/
sarvaṃ tasyāparihṛtaṃ samaṃ sādhyena jāyate//

When a refutation is based on *śūnyatā* and an opponent counter-refutes, he is not able to counter-refute everything since the counter-refutation will be the same (nature) as the contention (*sādhya*).

Note: This is an extremely subtle and cryptic verse which Candrakīrti clarifies as a play between with self-nature (*sasvabhāva*) and without self-nature (*niḥsvabhāva*). The Mādhyamika with its refutation based on *śūnyatā* always maintains the latter, *niḥsvabhāva*, of all entities. Cf. *Prasannapadā*, p. 127.

Verse 9

vyākhyāne ya upālambhaṃ kṛte śūnyatayā vadet/
sarvaṃ tasyānupālabdhaṃ samaṃ sādhyena jāyate//

When an exposition is based on śūnyatā and an opponent censors, he is not able to censor everything since the censorship will be the same (nature) as the contention.

CHAPTER V

Dhātu parīkṣā

Examination of the Dhātus

In this chapter Nāgārjuna considers the nature of true knowledge of the six realms or "elements" (*dhātus*), i.e., *bhū* (earth), *jala* (water), *tejas* (fire), *anila* (wind), *ākāśa* (space) and *vijñāna* (consciousness). As in previous chapters he treats only one of the elements, this time the *ākāśa*, and demonstrates how it cannot exist in four respects. That is to say, *ākāśa* cannot exist as (1) an entity or existence (*bhāva*), (2) a non-entity or non-existence (*abhāva*), (3) a characterization (*lakṣya*), and (4) a characteristic (*lakṣaṇa*). These four aspects are applicable to the other five dhātus. In the last verse Nāgārjuna comes out with the truth of things in the Mādhyamika sense that one who indulges in the conceptualization of nature's elements, e.g., into existence and non-existence, will never arrive at their real perception or understanding.

Verse 1

nākāśam vidyate kiṃ citpūrvamākāśalakṣaṇāt/
alakṣaṇaṃ prasajyeta syātpūrvaṃ yadi lakṣaṇāt//

Prior to any spatial characteristics, space cannot exist. If it can exist prior to any characteristics, then, necessarily, it falls into the error of (imputing) a space without characteristics.

Verse 2

alakṣaṇo na kaścicca bhāvaḥ saṃvidyate kva cit/
asatyalakṣaṇe bhāve kramatāṃ kuha lakṣaṇaṃ//

Nowhere is there any entity without characteristics. When there is no entity without characteristics, where could the characteristics appear?

Verse 3

nālakṣaṇe lakṣaṇasya pravṛttirna salakṣaṇe/
salakṣaṇālaksanābhyāṃ nāpyanyatra pravartate//

In instances of either with or without characteristics, there is no production of characteristics. Again, there is no production in another place other than the two (i.e., with and without characteristics).

Verse 4

lakṣaṇāsaṃpravṛttau ca na lakṣyamupapadyate/
lakṣyasyānupapattau ca lakṣaṇasyāpyasaṃbhavaḥ//

Where characteristics do not arise, there can be no characterization. And where characterization is not possible, characteristics will not arise.

Verse 5

tasmānna vidyate lakṣyaṃ lakṣaṇaṃ naiva vidyate/
lakṣyalakṣaṇanirmukto naivo bhāvo 'pi vidyate//

Therefore, characterization as well as characteristics cannot exist. Again, an entity devoid of both characterization and characteristics cannot exist.

Verse 6

avidyamāne bhāve ca kasyābhāvo bhaviṣyati/
bhāvābhāvavidharmā ca bhāvābhāvamavaiti kaḥ//

Where an entity is non-existent, how can any non-entity exist? Moreover, destitute of either entity or non-entity, who can ever know anything apart from these?

Verse 7

tasmānna bhāvo nābhāvo na lakṣyaṃ nāpi lakṣaṇam/
ākāśaṃ ākāśasamā dhātavaḥ pañca ye pare//

Therefore, space is not an entity, non-entity, characterization or characteristics. The rest of the other five dhātus can be treated in the same manner as space.

Verse 8

astitvaṃ ye tu paśyanti nāstitvaṃ cālpabuddhayaḥ/
bhāvānāṃ te na paśyanti draṣṭavyopaśamaṃ śivaṃ//

Those of low intelligence (i.e., inferior insight) who see only the existence and non-existence of things cannot perceive the wonderful quiescence of things.

CHAPTER VI

Rāgarakta parīkṣā

Examination of Passion and the Impassioned Self

This chapter is concerned with the concepts of passion (*rāga*, affection) and the impassioned self (*rakta*, the one who is impassioned and thereby "defiled"). Nāgārjuna carries out the discussion on the basis of differing temporal movements. He first inquires into whether the impassioned self can exist apart from the passion and, should it be so, then the passion, in turn, must depend on it. Next, he considers simultaneous occurrence but the idea of simultaneity or concomitance of two entities is an illusion and, surely, a confusion of terms. He clearly demonstrates the fact that as one wishes for concomitance, one still desires to maintain the diversity of elements; and vice versa, as one seeks for diversity one also wishes to assert concomitance at the same time. In short, Nāgārjuna indicates that diversity and unity are two different concepts which cannot be confused with reference to reality. Similarly, the concepts of passion and the impassioned self must be viewed aright, never to be spoken of together nor separately. The intimations here are towards the Mādhyamika idea of the *śūnyatā* of *dharmas* (the "emptiness" of all factors of experience).

Verse 1

rāgādyadi bhavetpūrvaṃ rakto rāgatiraskṛtaḥ/
tam pratītya bhavedrāgo rakte rāgo bhavetsati//

> If prior to and separated from the passion the impassioned self is admitted to exist, then the passion will be contingent on the impassioned self. Thus the passion exists only from the fact of the existence of the impassioned self.

Verse 2

rakte 'sati punā rāgaḥ kuta eva bhaviṣyati/
sati vāsati vā rāge rakte 'pyeṣa samaḥ kramaḥ//

Again, from the non-existence of the impassioned self, where can the passion be? Whether the passion exists or does not, (once again), the impassioned self can be treated in the same manner.

Verse 3

sahaiva punarudbhūtirna yuktā rāgaraktayoḥ/
bhavetāṃ rāgaraktau hi nirapekṣau parasparaṃ//

Again, simultaneous occurrence of the passion and the impassioned self is inconceivable because, surely, both of them are not mutually dependent on each other for existence.

Verse 4

naikatve sahabhāvo 'sti na tenaiva hi tatsaha/
pṛthaktve sahabhāvo 'tha kuta eva bhaviṣyati//

In a unity (of passion and impassioned self), there is no concomitance because a thing does not come together with another. In a diversity, on the other hand, how does such a concomitance arise?

Verse 5

ekatve sahabhāvaścet syātsahāyaṃ vināpi saḥ/
pṛthaktve sahabhāvaṣcet syātsahāyaṃ vināpi saḥ//

If (it is admitted that) there is concomitance in a unity, then concomitance may also occur without a coming together. If (it is admitted that) there is concomitance in a diversity, then concomitance may also occur without a coming together.

Verse 6

pṛthaktve sahabhāvaśca yadi kiṃ rāgaraktayoḥ/
siddhaḥ pṛthakpṛthagbhāvaḥ sahabhāvo yatastayoḥ//

If there is concomitance in a diversity, in what manner does the passion and the impassioned self exist together? For

then concomitance arises when there is a completion of the two separate entities.

Verse 7

siddhaḥ pṛthak pṛthagbhāvo yadi vā rāgaraktayoḥ/
sahabhāvaṃ kimartham tu parikalpayase tayoḥ//

Moreover, if there is an establishment of the diverse (nature of) passion and the impassioned self, then what is the purpose of your contriving a concomitance of the two?

Verse 8

pṛthagna sidhyatītyevaṃ sahabhāvaṃ vikāṅkṣasi/
sahabhāvaprasiddhyarthaṃ pṛthaktvaṃ bhūya icchasi//

You say that there is no establishment of the diversity (of entities) and, at the same time, you seek for concomitance. On the other hand, while projecting the establishment of concomitance, once again, you are desirous of diversity.

Verse 9

pṛthagbhāvāprasiddheśca sahabhāvo na sidhyati/
katamasmin pṛthagbhāve sahabhāvaṃ satīcchasi//

Without the establishment of diverse entities, there is no concomitance. In what kind of diversity (of entities) are you desirous of establishing concomitance?

Verse 10

evaṃ raktena rāgasya siddhirna saha nāsaha/
rāgavatsarvadharmāṇāṃ siddhirna nāsaha//

Consequently, there is no establishment of passion with or without the accompaniment of the impassioned self. Similar to passion, there is no establishment of the dharmas (i.e., factors of existence) with or without the accompaniment (of the *dharmaic* self).

CHAPTER VII

Saṃskṛta parīkṣā

Examination of the Created Realm of Existence

This is one of the more comprehensive chapters dealing with the interesting topic of the so-called compounded nature or created realm of existence. The Chinese title refers to this chapter as the examination of the three characteristics, i.e., origination (*utpāda*), duration (*sthiti*) and cessation (*bhaṅga*), and thereby presents a clearer pictures as to what the chapter discusses.

The argument for the impossibility of maintaining the created realm is carried through by means of the three characteristics and with the same type of logic we have seen employed in Chapter II, i.e., with respect to the analysis of *gamyamāna*, *gata*, and *agata*. Here again, each moment of the created realm, for example, the characteristic of origination, is taken up and the question is raised whether something prior or previous to it can be its cause. The advancement of a cause invariably breaks down because what has arisen does not require a cause nor does what has not arisen. This analysis is carried through with the other two characteristics of duration and cessation. The breaking up of entities into different moments is an impossibility and thus Nāgārjuna states finally that the establishment of origination, duration and cessation is not possible at all and that there is no such thing as a created realm. His central position is clearly expressed in Verse 16: "Any thing (i.e., factor of existence) which exists by virtue of relational dependence is quiescence in itself. Therefore, presently arising and origination per se are likewise in the nature of quiescence."

Verse 1

yadi saṃskṛta utpādastatra yuktā trilakṣaṇī/
athāsaṃskṛta utpādaḥ kathaṃ saṃskṛtalakṣaṇaṃ//

If origination is of the created nature, then the three characteristics (i.e., origination, duration, cessation) will prevail. But if origination is of the uncreated nature, how could it be a characteristic of the created?

Verse 2

utpādādyāstrayo vyastā nālaṃ lakṣaṇakarmaṇi/
saṃskṛtasya samastāḥ syurekatra kathamekadā//

When the three characteristics of origination, etc. are discrete, there will be no action in the characteristics with respect to the created nature. And if they are compounded or united, how could they occur at the same time in the same place?

Verse 3

utpādasthitibhaṅgānāmanyatsaṃskṛtalakṣaṇaṃ/
asti cedanavasthaivaṃ nāsti cette na saṃskṛtāḥ//

If other characteristics of the created nature besides that of origination, duration and cessation are permitted, then this process (of assigning characteristics) could go on *ad infinitum.* If they are not permitted, on the other hand, then they are not of the created nature.

Verse 4

utpādotpāda utpādo mūlotpādasya kevalaṃ/
utpādotpādamutpādo maulo janayate punaḥ//

The origination of origination is nothing but the arising of the primal origination. And of course the primal origination gives rise to the origination of origination.

Verse 5

utpādotpāda utpādo mūlotpādāsya te yadi/
maulenājanitastaṃ te sa kathaṃ janayiṣyati//

If you say that the origination of origination is the arising of the primal origination, then how could it give rise to the primal origination, when it depends on the latter (for its own being) and has not yet arisen?

Verse 6

sa te maulena janito maulaṃ janayate yadi/
maulaḥ sa tenājanitastamutpādayate kathaṃ//

If you say that that which depends on the primal origination gives rise to the primal origination, then how could it give rise to the primal origination which in turn depends on the origination of origination and which has not yet arisen?

Verse 7

ayamutpādyamānaste kāmamutpādayedimaṃ/
yadīmamutpādayitumajātaḥ śaknuyādayam//

This so-called presently originating will, as you wish, cause an origination if that which has not arisen is capable of causing such an origination.

Verse 8 (The opponent contends)

pradīpaḥ svaparātmānau saṃprakāśayitā yathā/
utpādaḥ svaparātmānāvubhāvutpādayettathā//

As light illumines both itself and other entities, so does origination give rise to both itself and others.

Verse 9 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

pradīpe nāndhakāro 'ṣti yatra cāsau pratiṣṭhitaḥ/
kiṃ prakāśayati dīpaḥ prakāśo hi tamovadhaḥ//

There is no darkness in light or in its abode. What does light illumine when, indeed, it destroys darkness?

Verse 10

kathamutpadyamānena pradīpena tamo hataṃ/
notpadyamāno hi tamaḥ pradīpaḥ prāpnute yadā//

How could darkness be destroyed by a presently shining light? For, indeed, the presently shining light has not as yet extended over to darkness.

Verse 11

aprāpyaiva pradīpena yadi vā nihataṃ tamaḥ/
ihasthaḥ sarvalokasthaṃ sa tamo nihaniṣyati//

If darkness is destroyed by light which is not extended, then light, in such a state, will destroy the whole world of darkness.

Verse 12

pradīpaḥ svaparātmānau saṃprakāśayate yadi/
tamo 'pi svaparātmānau chādayiṣyatyasaṃśayaṃ//

If light illumines both itself and other entities, then undoubtedly, darkness will also darken itself and other entities as well.

Verse 13

anutpanno 'yamutpādaḥ svātmānaṃ janayetkathaṃ/
athotpanno janayate jāte kiṃ janyate punaḥ//

How could an origination which has not arisen give rise to its own self? Again, if that which has arisen gives rise to itself, how could there be a rise again?

Verse 14

notpadyamānaṃ notpannaṃ nānutpannaṃ kathaṃ cana/
utpadyate tathākhyātaṃ gamyamānagatāgataiḥ//

In no way is it possible that origination rises from presently arising, that which has arisen, or that which has not arisen. This (line of argument) has already been discussed with respect to *gamymāna*, *gata*, and *agata*.

Note: Reference is here made to Chapter II on *Gatāgata parīkṣā*.

Verse 15

utpadyamānamutpattāvidaṃ na kramate yadā/
kathamutpadyamānaṃ tu pratītyotpattimucyate//

When this presently arising does not proceed from the origination, how can it be said that the former depends on the latter?

Verse 16

pratītya yadyadbhavati tattacchāntaṃ svabhāvataḥ/
tasmādutpadyamānaṃ ca śāntamutpattireva ca//

Any entity which exists by virtue of relational origination is quiescence in itself. Therefore, presently arising and origination per se are likewise in the nature of quiescence.

Verse 17

yadi kaścidanutpanno bhāvaḥ saṃvidyate kva cit/
utpadyeta sa kiṃ tasminbhāva utpadyate 'sati//

If an entity which has not arisen is granted to exist somewhere, then it would originate. But how could this entity, when it actually does not exist, originate?

Verse 18

utpadyamānamutpādo yadi cotpādayatyayaṃ/
utpādayettamutpādamutpādaḥ katamaḥ punaḥ//

If origination gives rise to the presently arising, then again, what kind of origination will now give rise to the (first type of) origination?

Verse 19

anya utpādayatyenaṃ yadyutpādo 'navasthitiḥ/
athānutpāda utpannaḥ sarvamutpadyate tathā//

If another (origination) gives rise to this (first) origination, then origination will go on *ad infinitum*. But if that which has arisen arises from non-origination, then everything will arise in such a way.

Verse 20

sataśca tāvadutpattirasataśca na yujyate/
na sataścāsataśceti pūrvamevopapāditaṃ//

Indeed, an origination relative to either being or non-being cannot by justified. Nor is it possible with being and non-being (at the same time). This has been demonstrated before.

Note: Reference is to Chapter I, Verses 6 & 7.

Verse 21

nirudhyamānasyotpattirna bhāvasyopapadyate/
yaścānirudhyamānastu sa bhāvo nopapadyate//

Origination of a presently extinguishing entity is impossible. Moreover, it is equally impossible for a presently non-extinguishing entity.

Verse 22

na sthitabhāvastiṣṭhatyasthitabhāvo na tiṣṭhati/
na tiṣṭhati tiṣṭhamānaḥ ko 'nutpannaśca tiṣṭhati//

An entity which has arisen does not abide (i.e., endure) nor does an entity which has not arisen. A presently enduring entity also does not abide. How could something without origination abide?

Verse 23

sthitirnirudhyamānasya na bhāvasyopapadyate/
yaścānirudhyamānastu sa bhāvo nopapadyate//

The abiding of a presently extinguishing entity is impossible. Indeed, the abiding of a presently non-extinguishing entity is equally impossible.

Verse 24

jarāmaraṇadharmeṣu sarvabhāveṣu sarvadā/
tiṣṭhanti katame bhāvā ye jarāmaraṇaṃ vinā//

As all entities are always subject to the conditions (i.e., *dharmas*) of ageing and death, what entities abide which are not subject to the conditions?

Verse 25

sthityānyayā sthiteḥ sthānaṃ tayaiva ca na yujyate/
utpādasya yathotpādo nātmanā na parātmanā//

The abiding state of an entity is not justifiable on the grounds of another entity's abiding or by its own abiding. This is just as the origination of origination which is dependent neither on its own self nor on another.

Verse 26

nirudhyate nāniruddhaṃ na niruddhaṃ nirudhyate/
tathāpi nirudhyamānaṃ kimajātaṃ nirudhyate//

That which has not extinguished does not extinguish. That which has extinguished does not extinguish also. This is alsc the case with that which is presently extinguishing. How could an entity which has not arisen extinguish itself?

Verse 27

sthitasya tāvadbhāvasya nirodho nopapadyate/
nāsthitasyāpi bhāvasya nirodha upapadyate//

In truth, the cessation of an abiding entity is not possible. Also, the cessation of a non-abiding entity is not possible.

Verse 28

tayaivāvasthayāvasthā na hi saiva nirudhyate/
anyayāvasthayāvasthā na cānyaiva nirudhyate//

From its abiding state, surely, the same state does not extinguish itself. Also, from another abiding state, that state does not extinguish itself.

Verse 29

yadaiva sarvadharmāṇāmutpādo nopapadyate/
tadaivaṃ sarvadharmāṇāṃ nirodho nopapadyate//

As the origination of all *dharmas* (i.e., factors of existence) is not possible, so, also, is the cessation of all *dharmas*.

Verse 30

satāśca tāvadbhāvasya nirodho nopapadyate/
ekatve na hi bhāvaśca nābhāvaścopapadyate//

In truth, the cessation of a real existing entity is not possible. For, indeed, it is not possible to have the nature of both existence and non-existence at the same time.

Verse 31

asato 'pi na bhāvasya nirodha upapadyate/
na dvitīyasya śirasaḥ chedanaṃ vidyate yathā//

The cessation of an unreal existing entity is also not possible. It is as if the severance of a second head (of a person) is inconceivable.

Verse 32

na svātmanā nirodho 'sti nirodho na parātmanā/
utpādasya yathotpādo nātmanā na parātmanā//

There is no cessation by itself or by another entity. It is just as the origination of origination does not arise by itself or by another.

Verse 33

utpādasthitibhaṅgānāmasiddhernāsti saṃskṛtaṃ/
saṃskṛtasyāprasiddhau ca kathaṃ setsyatyasaṃskṛtaṃ//

As the establishment of origination, duration and cessation is not possible there is no created realm. Without the establishment of the created realm, how then will the uncreated realm come about?

Verse 34

yathā māyā yathā svapno gandharvanagaraṃ yathā/
tathotpādastathā sthānaṃ tathā bhaṅga udāhṛtaṃ//

It is like an illusion, a dream, or an imaginary city in the sky. In such a way, (the concepts of) origination, duration, and cessation have been described.

CHAPTER VIII

Karmakāraka parīkṣā

Examination of the Doer and the Deed

This chapter brings to sharp focus the Buddhist conceptions of the doer (*kāraka*) and his deed (*karman*) in order to correctly understand the workings of the dharmas in the realm of created elements (*saṃskṛtāḥ dharmāḥ*). In discussing the two concepts, Nāgārjuna introduces the metaphysical notion of a thing in its finished or completed state (*sadbhūta*) as well as its unfinished or incompleted state (*asadbhūta*) and attempts to illustrate the various possible conditions expressible and assignable with respect to the doer and his deed. But all these conditions, which are taken up in turn, are untenable. The utimate standpoint is that of the dynamics of relational structure (*pratītya*) which occurs in Verse 12 and which is an important link with the Mādhyamika Credo. The final verse speaks of the various other phenomena which can be examined similarly as that of the doer and his deed, thus projecting into and anticipating the next two chapters which discuss, respectively, the former or antecedent state of an entity and the relationship between fire and wood.

In looking over the verses it would be worth noting that Candrakirṭi, in reference to the initial verse, discusses an interesting contrast between the completed and incompleted states of the doer and his deed. It illustrates the two alternatives in which these terms are related as follows:

sadbhūta (=kriyā yukta)–[–kāraka / –karman]

asadbhūta (=kriyā rahita)–[–kāraka / –karman]

The completed state is accompanied by function (*kriyā*) while the incompleted state is not. Yet, in discussing either the doer or the deed, the function represents a third concept. And furthermore, as the first verse below clearly indicates, the status of any entity in a completed or incompleted state cannot issue forth another entity.

Note: The above diagrams are discussed by S. Yamaguchi in this Japanese translation of the *Prasannapadā*. Confer Vol. II, *op. cit.* pp. 127–28; Notes 14 & 16.

Verse 1

sadbhūtaḥ kārakaḥ karma sadbhūtaṃ na karotyayaṃ/
kārako nāpyasadbhūtaḥ karmāsadbhūtamīhate//

A doer in a completed state cannot create a deed in a completed state. Again, a doer in an incompleted state cannot create a deed in an incompleted state.

Verse 2

sadbhūtasya kriyā nāsti karma ca syādakartṛkaṃ/
sadbhūtasya kriyā nāsti kartā ca syādakarmakaḥ//

When a doer is in a completed state, there will be no doing and also a deed will be without a doer. Likewise, when a deed is in a completed state, there will be no doing and also a doer will be without a deed.

Note: The concept of a function or doing is introduced here to set up a triadic relationship, i.e., with respect to doer (*kāraka, kartṛ*), doing (*kriyā*), and the deed (*karman*).

Verse 3

karoti yadyasadbhūto 'sadbhūtaṃ karma kārakaḥ/
ahetukaṃ bhavetkarma kartā cāhetuko bhavet//

If a doer in an incompleted state creates a deed in an incompleted state, then (in actuality) the deed will be without a cause and the doer will (in itself) have no cause.

Note: The Chinese version has the completed state or fixed being (*ting-yu* 定有) (*sadbhūta*) instead of the incompleted state (*asad-*

bhūta). This is clearly an error on the part of the Chinese interpretation since the previous verse illustrates the situation of the completed state.

Verse 4

hetāvasati kāryaṃ ca kāraṇaṃ ca na vidyate/
tadabhāve kriyā kartā kāraṇaṃ ca na vidyate//

Without a cause, there can be no effect or an efficient cause. Without these (effect and cause), there can be no functions of doing, doer and deed.

Note: *Hetu* which is simply cause must be distinguished for *kāraṇa* which is an instrumental or efficient cause, i.e., having a potential. The *kāraṇa* in the second line is used synonymously for *karman*.

Verse 5

dharmādharmau na vidyate kriyādīnāmasaṃbhave/
dharme cāsatyadharme ca phalaṃ tajjaṃ na vidyate//

Without these functions, etc. [doer, deed], there can be no factors (*dharma*) and non-factors (*adharma*) of experience. Without factors and non-factors there can be nothing arising out of them.

Verse 6

phale 'sati na mokṣāya na svargāyopapadyate/
mārgaḥ sarvakriyāṇāṃ ca nairarthakyaṃ prasajyate//

When there is no effect there will be no way of arriving at liberation or the heavens. For all doings or functions will fall into purposelessness.

Verse 7

kārakaḥ sadasadbhūtaḥ sadasatkurute na tat/
parasparaviruddhaṃ hi saccāsaccaikataḥ kutaḥ//

A completed-incompleted doer cannot create a completed-incompleted deed. For, how could the mutually conflicting completed and incompleted states co-exist as one?

Verse 8

satā ca kriyate nāsannāsatā kriyate ca sat/
kartrā sarve prasajyante doṣāstatra ta eva hi//

A completed doer cannot create an incompleted deed nor can an incompleted doer create a completed deed. For, (if the above conditions are not accepted), thereupon all fallacies will follow.

Verse 9

nāsadbūtaṃ na sadbhūtaḥ sadasadbhūtameva vā/
karoti kārakaḥ karma pūrvoktaireva hetubhiḥ//

A completed doer cannot create an incompleted deed nor that of a completed-incompleted deed. This is according to the reason expounded in previous verses (i.e., verses 2 and 3).

Verse 10

nāsaddbhūto 'pi sadbhūtaṃ sadasadbhūtameva vā/
karoti kārakaḥ karma pūrvoktaireva hetubhiḥ//

An incompleted doer also cannot create a completed deed nor that of a completed-incompleted deed. This is according to the reason expounded in previous verses (i.e., verse 4, 5, and 6).

Verse 11

karoti sadasadbhūto na sannāsacca kārakaḥ/
karma tattu vijānīyātpūrvoktaireva hetubhiḥ//

A completed-incompleted doer cannot create either a completed or incompleted deed. That is to be known by the reason stated previously (i.e., Verse 7).

Verse 12

pratītya kārakaḥ karma taṃ pratītya ca kārakaṃ/
karma pravartate nānyatpaśyāmaḥ siddhikāraṇaṃ//

The doer is dynamically related to the deed and the deed to the doer in order to arise. We cannot perceive any other cause for their establishment or completion.

Verse 13

evaṃ vidyādupādānaṃ vyutsargāditi karmaṇaḥ/
kartuśca karmakartṛbhyāṃ śeṣān bhāvān vibhāvayet//

Thus, by way of the refutation of the (static concepts of the) doer and the deed, the concept of seizing or clinging (*upādāna*) can be known. And basing the analysis on both the doer and the deed, various other entities (i.e., phenomena) can be understood.

CHAPTER IX

Pūrva parīkṣā

Examination of the Antecedent State of the Self

The chapter examines the antecedent state of the self (*ātman*). It can be conveniently analyzed in terms of the *upādātṛ* (*ch'ü-che, shou-che* 取者, 受者 subject, perceiver, percipient) and the *upādāna* (*ch'ü, shou, tso* 取, 受, 作 act of perceiving, seizing, clinging, or perception). As a matter of fact, this distinction occurs in the Tibetan title which Max Walleser renders as *Annehmer und Annehmen* (*upādātṛ-upādāna*).

The distinction actually issues forth another term in the process involved which is that of *upādeya* (*so-ch'ü, so-shou* 所取, 所受 the perceptual realm). From the above it is clear that *upādātṛ* and *upādāna* are internal elements or aspects in the perceiving function while *upādeya* gives an external spread of such a function. And the total process is a triadic relationship. The Mādhyamika standpoint here is to destroy the wholly formal, logical, or conceptual notions concerning the process involved in perception. Thus the examination is not solely restricted to former states of the perceiver but also concerns with the present and future states. This is the import of the last verse.

Verse 1

darśanaśravaṇādīni vedanādīni cāpyatha/
bhavanti yasya prāgebhyaḥ so 'stītyeke vadantyuta//

> Of the existence of an entity which sees, hears, etc. or which feels, etc., some people assert that it exists prior to its functions.

Note: The functions are distinguished between the five faculties of perception (*buddhīndriyāṇi* or *jñānendriyāṇi*) which are *darśana* (seeing), *śravaṇa* (hearing), *ghrāṇa* (smelling), *rasana* (tasting), and *sparśana* (touching), and the five constituent elements of being (*pañcaskandhas*) which are *rūpa* (bodily or material form), *vedanā* (feeling, sensation), *saṃjñā* (awareness, perception), *saṃskāra* (aggregate of formations or mental conformations), and *vijñāna* (conscious or discriminative thought faculty.)

Verse 2

kathaṃ hyavidyamānasya darśanādi bhaviṣyati/
bhāvasya tasmātprāgebhyaḥ so 'sti bhāvo vyavasthitaḥ//

How is it that seeing, etc. come to be of a presently non-existing entity? Consequently, the entity (seemingly) exists abidingly prior to its functions.

Verse 3

darśanaśravaṇādibhyo vedanādibhya eva ca/
yaḥ prāgvyavasthito bhāvaḥ kena prajñapyate 'tha saḥ//

If the entity exists abidingly prior to its functions of seeing, hearing, etc., or feeling, etc., then by what means is it known?

Verse 4

vināpi darśanādīni yadi cāsau vyavasthita/
amūnyapi bhaviṣyanti vinā tena na saṃśayaḥ//

If the abiding entity could exist apart from the functions of seeing, etc., then undoubtedly the functions too could exist without the entity.

Verse 5

ajyate kena cit [kaścit] kiṃ citkena cidajyate/
kutaḥ kiṃ cidvinā kaścitkiṃ citkiṃ cidvinā kutaḥ//

An entity is made manifest by its attendant functions and, vice versa, the functions are known by way of the entity to which they belong. How is it possible for an entity to be without its functions and the functions without their entity?

Verse 6 (The opponent contends)

sarvebhyo darśanādibhyaḥ kaścitpūrvo na vidyate/

ajyate darśanādīnāmanyena punaranyadā//

No entity could exist prior to all its functions of seeing, etc. By means of the different functions of seeing, etc., the entity appears in different moments.

Verse 7 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

sarvebhyo darśanādibhyo yadi pūrvo na vidyate/

ekaikasmātkathaṃ pūrvo darśanādeḥ sa vidyate//

If the entity does not exist prior to all its functions ot seeing, etc., then how could it exist prior to each of the functions?

Verse 8

draṣṭā sa eva sa śrotā sa eva yadi vedakaḥ/

ekaikasmādbhavetpūrvaṃ evaṃ caitanna yujyate//

If (it is granted that) an entity which sees is concomitantly an entity which hears or feels, then that entity will exist prior to its functions. But such a situation could not be in accordance with reason.

Verse 9

draṣṭānya eva śrotānyo vedako 'nyaḥ punaryadi/

sati syāddraṣṭari śrotā bahutvaṃ cātmanāṃ bhavet//

If again (granted that) the entity which respectively sees, hears, and feels is individually distinct, then as there will be an entity which sees there will also be an entity which hears. But this situation would impose many forms on the entity.

Verse 10

darśanaśravaṇādīni vedanādīni cāpyatha/

bhavanti yebhyasteṣveṣa bhūteṣvapi na vidyate//

Of the arising of the functions of seeing, hearing, feeling, etc. out of the Elements, the entity too cannot be found to exist.

Note: Reference is made to the Four Great Elements of earth, water, fire and wind.

Verse 11

darśanaśravaṇādīni vedanādīni ˉāpyatha/
na vidyate cedyasya sa na vidyanta imānyapi//

If the entity which sees, hears, etc., or which feels, etc. cannot be found, then the functions themselves cannot also be found to exist.

Verse 12

prāk ca yo darśanādibhyaḥ sāṃpratam cordhvameva ca/
na vidyate 'sti nāstīti nivṛttāstatra kalpanāḥ//

Of an entity which does not exist prior to, concomitantly, or posterior to the functions of seeing, etc. the notions of existence and non-existence are unnecessary.

Note: ***Prāk***, ***sāṁprata***, and ***ūrdhva*** are translated by Kumārajīva as the three temporal existences (***san-shih*** 三世), i.e., past, present and future.

CHAPTER X

Agnīndhana parīkṣā

Examination of Wood and Fire

This chapter is one of the more significant expositions of the central concept of *pratītyasamutpāda*. The terms, fire (*agni*) and wood (*indhana*), are critically analyzed into whether they are the same (*ekatva*) or different (*anyatva*). In other words, a pair of terms relating to the Mādhyamika Credo, i.e., *anekārtham anānārtham*, is under review. The Credo comes to full light in this chapter but, as the 15th verse indicates, the same critical analysis thus employed can be extended to other entities, notably that of the self (*ātman*) and its seizing or grasping function (*upādāna*).

Special mention must be made here with respect to a novel job of interpreting the meaning of the technical term *paraspara-apekṣā* (mutual togetherness) as used in this chapter by Prof. Y. Ueda. (Confer his *Daijō-bukkyō-shisō-no-kompon-kōzō*; 大乘佛教思想の根本構造 "The Fundamental Construct of Mahāyāna Buddhist Thought." Kyoto: Hyakkaen, 1957. Chapter 3, pp. 67–103. This chapter originally appeared as an article in the *Tetsugaku-zasshi*; "Journal of Philosophy [Japanese]," March, 1951)

He is the first scholar to interpret and employ a principle which he claims to be central or basic to the unique type of "logic" employed in Mādhyamika philosophy. The unique logical principle in brief is that of any two concepts, e.g., fire and wood, there are inherent conditions in each such that their ultimate relationship into a whole or unity entails a mutual denial of each other. (相互排除性, 相互否定的關聯性). With this principle he arrives at the solution to the baffling statement that nothing is identical or differentiated as expressed in the Credo.

The germ of this logical thought had already been hinted at by Chinese as well as Japanese scholars, especially by those in the field of Zen, but this is not entirely a surprise because of the closeness or perhaps an ultimate identity, in the final analysis, of the foundations of Zen and Śūnyavāda. D. T. Suzuki, for example, speaks of the logic of immediate negation (即非の論理), H. Ui speaks of the logic of immediate negation-affirmation (即非是名の論理), and even as far back as the 12th Century A.D., Dōgen, the patriarch of Japanese Sōtō Zen, remarks on the union of the self and the other self (自己と他己の同一性). Despite these antecedent thoughts, due credit must go to Prof. Ueda for carrying out a clear and systematic exposition of the peculiar, if not unique, type of logic in use.

Verse 1

yadindhanaṃ sa cedagnirekatvaṃ kartṛkarmaṇoh/
anyaścedindhanādagnirindhanādapyṛte bhavet//

> If wood is the same as fire, then likewise the doer and his deed will be identical. If fire is distinct from wood, then it will exist without wood.

Verse 2

nityapradīpta eva syādapradīpanahetukaḥ/
punarārambhavaiyarthyamevaṃ cākarmakaḥ sati//

> If there is no cause for burning, then fire should burn constantly. And there will be no purpose in fire to start (i.e., to burn) again and it will then be without a function.

Verse 3

paratra nirapekṣatvādapradīpanahetukaḥ/
punarārambhavaiyarthyaṃ nityadīptaḥ prasajyate//

> Being unrelated to an other, it (i.e. fire) will be something without a cause for burning. Moreover, it will follow that a constantly burning fire would have no purpose of starting (i.e. burning) again.

Verse 4

tatraitasmādidhyamānamindhanaṃ bhavatīti cet/
kenedhyatāmindhanaṃ tattāvanmātramidaṃ yadā//

Thus, if it is granted that there is wood in the burning (process) and that only wood is burning, then by what means will it burn?

Verse 5

anyo na prāpsyate 'prapto na dhakṣyatyadahan punaḥ/
na nirvāsyatyanirvāṇaḥ sthāsyate vā svaliṅgavān//

A different thing (i.e., fire distinguished from wood) is never effected and a non-effected thing will never burn. And, in turn, a non-burning thing will never extinguish itself while a non-extinguishing thing, having its own characteristics, will continue to endure itself.

Verse 6 (The opponent contends)

anya evendhanādagnirindhanaṃ prāpnuyādyadi/
strī saṃprāpnoti puruṣaṃ puruṣaśca strīyaṃ yathā//

If fire which is distinct from wood should unite with wood, it would be like a woman uniting with a man and, *vice versa*, a man uniting with a woman.

Note: Kumārajīva translates this union as between this person (*tsu jen* 此人) and that person (*pi jen* 彼人) but the Sanskrit definitely refers to a man (*puruṣa*) and a woman (*strī*). Both, however, carry the meaning across. At any rate, this opposition must never be confused with the union of husband and wife which are inseparable or correlative concepts.

Verse 7 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

anya evendhanādagnirindhanaṃ kāmamāpnuyāt/
agnīndhane yadi syātāmanyonyena tiraskṛte//

Fire which is distinct from wood will unite with the latter freely as you contend, if and only if, the two have mutually distinct existences.

Verse 8

yadīndhanamapekṣyāgnirapekṣyāgnim yadīndhanaṃ/
kataratpūrvaniṣpannaṃ yadapekṣyāgnirindhanaṃ//

If fire is dependent on wood and wood on fire, then each one must have had a prior completed state and to which the other depends.

Verse 9

yadīndhanamapekṣyāgniragneḥ siddhasya sādhanaṃ/
evaṃ satīndhanaṃ cāpi bhaviṣyati niragnikaṃ//

If fire is dependent on wood then an already existing fire will again be effectuating itself. If that is so then wood also will exist without fire.

Verse 10

yo 'pekṣya sidhyate bhāvastamevāpekṣya sidhyati/
yadi yo 'pekṣitavyaḥ sa sidhyatāṃ kamapekṣya kaḥ//

If an entity depends on another entity in order to manifest itself, the latter will also depend on the former for its manifestation. If what is to be dependent on for manifestation already exists, then (the question is) what depends on what?

Verse 11

yo 'pekṣya sidhyate bhāvaḥ so 'siddho 'pekṣate kathaṃ/
athāpyapekṣate siddhastvapekṣāsya na yujyate//

An entity depends on an other for realization (i.e., manifestation) but, in an unrealized (i.e., unmanifested) state, what is the manner of dependence? And again, even though (the entity) is already in a dependently manifested state, the nature of dependence is not possible.

Verse 12

apekṣyendhanamagnirna nānapekṣyāgnirindhanaṃ/
apekṣyendhanamagniṃ na nānapekṣyāgnimindhanaṃ//

Fire does not exist by dependence on wood nor does it exist by non-dependence on wood. Likewise, wood does not exist by dependence or non-dependence on fire.

Verse 13

āgacchatyanyato nāgnirindhane 'gnirna vidyate/
atrendhane śeṣamuktaṃ gamyamānagatāgataiḥ//

Fire does not come from something else nor does it exist in the wood. With respect to wood the remaining issues have been taken up in the discussion of present passing away, that which has transpired, and that which has not transpired.

Note: Reference is to Chapter II.

Verse 14

indhanaṃ punaragnirna nāgniranyatra cendhanāt/
nāgnirindhanavānnāgnāvindhanāni na teṣu saḥ//

Again, fire is not wood nor is it in something else than wood. Fire does not contain wood. There is neither wood in fire nor fire in wood.

Verse 15

agnīndhanābhyāṃ vyākhyāta ātmopādānayoḥ kramaḥ/
sarvo niravaśeṣeṇa sārdhaṃ ghaṭapaṭādibhiḥ//

By means of the analysis of fire and wood, the total relationship between *ātman* and *upādāna*, and along with the (notions of) earthen jar, cloth, etc., have all been explained without fail.

Note: ***Ātman*** and ***upādāna*** refer to man and his five basic functions (*skandhas*). This verse is a summation of the analysis of wood and fire, and the analysis, Nāgārjuna contends, can be employed to all "entities" (*dharmas*) including the self (ātman) and its functions in order to show the fallacies involved in maintaining preconceived notions.

Verse 16

ātmanaśca satattvaṃ ye bhāvānāṃ ca pṛthak pṛthak/
nirdiśanti na tānmanye śāsanasyārthakovidān//

Insofar as I am concerned, those who speak of the reality of entities and who assign them distinct existences cannot be considered truly knowledgeable of the (Buddha's) teachings.

CHAPTER XI

Pūrvāparakoṭi parīkṣā

Examination of Antecedent and Consequent States in the Empirical Realm

In the Tibetan *Dhu na rtsa baḥi ḥgrel pa ga las ḥjigs med* (*Mūlamadhyamakavṛttyakutobhaya*), the Chinese *Pan-jo-teng-lun-shih* (般若燈論釋) and the *Ta-ch'eng-chung-kuan-shih-lun* (大乘中觀釋論), the title is the Examination of *Saṃsāra* (*lun hui* 輪廻, life-death cycle). An investigation of the content of the present chapter reveals that this title is quite justifiable. However, Candrakīrti's Sanskrit title is not without a basis since it suggests that the discussion of *saṃsāra* should be carried to its extremes, hence the term, *koṭi*, and exhibit its impossibility. Here again, as in previous chapters, the argument develops by breaking up the doctrine of *saṃsāra* into separate elements, i.e., into the three temporal moments of prior, posterior and simultaneity, and by showing the ultimate obscurity and uncertainty of these elements. All existences in truth are instances of the fact of *śūnyatā* which does not lend itself to analysis and description.

Verse 1

pūrvā prajñāyate koṭirnetyuvāca mahāmuniḥ/
saṃsāro 'navarāgro hi nāsyādirnāpi paścimaṃ//

> The great wise one (i.e., Śākyamuni) has said that the state anterior to *saṃsāra* (i.e., life-death cycle or the empirical realm) cannot be grasped. For, *saṃsāra* has no beginning and end; that is to say, no definite points of commencement and conclusion.

Verse 2

naivāgraṃ nāvaraṃ yasya tasya madhyaṃ kuto bhavet/
tasmānnātropapadyante pūrvāparasahakramāḥ//

As there are no beginning and end, how could there be a middle? Therefore, the simultaneity, anterior, and posterior states (of *saṃsāra*) are not possible.

Vesre 3

pūrvaṃ jātiryadi bhavejjarāmaraṇamuttaraṃ/
nirjarāmaraṇā jātirbhavejjāyeta cāmṛtaḥ//

If birth is anterior and old age-death posterior, then there will be birth without old age-death and this will entail the rise of a deathless being.

Verse 4

paścājjātiryadi bhavejjarāmaraṇamāditaḥ/
ahetukamajātasya syājjarāmaraṇaṃ kathaṃ//

If birth is posterior and old age-death anterior, that would consitute a state of non-causal connection. For, of something yet to be born, how could there be old age-death?

Verse 5

na jarāmaraṇenaiva jātiśca saha yujyate/
mriyeta jāyamānaśca syāccāhetukatobhayoḥ//

Indeed, birth is never conceived to be simultaneous with old age-death. For, what is in the process of being born must die and both life and death are non-causally related.

Verse 6

yatra na prabhavantyete pūrvāparasahakramāḥ/
prapañcayanti tāṃ jātiṃ tajjarāmaraṇaṃ ca kiṃ//

Where states of anterior, posterior, and simultaneity (of *saṃsāra*) do not exist, how could the concepts of birth and old age-death be projected?

Verse 7

kāryaṃ ca kāraṇaṃ caiva lakṣyaṃ lakṣaṇameva ca/
vedanā vedakaścaiva santyarthā ye ca ke cana//

Cause and effect, characteristics and characterization, feeler and feeling, and also whatever other things exist....(This verse continues on to the next.)

Verse 8

pūrva na vidyate koṭiḥ saṃsārasya na kevalaṃ/
sarveṣāmapi bhāvānāṃ pūrvā koṭi na vidyate//

....not only is there not an anterior state in *saṃsāra* but this state is not possible for all existences.

CHAPTER XII

Duḥkha parīkṣā

Examination of Suffering

As the chapter indicates, the discussion is on the investigation of pain or suffering (*duḥkha*). The problem is stated in the opening verse which asserts the four possible ways of viewing the causes of suffering, i.e., self-cause, other-cause, both self and other cause, and non-causal. In each instance the usual logic of *reductio ad absurdum* (*prasaṅga*) is applied to exhibit the untenability of each causal view. Nāgārjuna concludes by making reference to the fact that the four-fold possible views (*cāturvidhyam*) can equally be applied to demonstrate the impossibility of asserting elements of the external world.

Verse 1

svayaṃ kṛtaṃ parakṛtaṃ dvābhyāṃ kṛtamahetukaṃ/
duḥkhamityeka icchanti tacca kāryaṃ na yujyate//

> Some assert that suffering arises by virtue of being self-caused, other-caused, both self and other-caused or non-causal. Such an assertion which treats suffering as an effect is not justifiable.

Verse 2

svayaṃ kṛtaṃ yadi bhavetpratītya na tato bhavet/
skandhānimānami skandhāḥ saṃbhavanti pratītya hi//

> If suffering is self-caused, it will not have a relational condition in arising. For, surely, these (present) skandhas are relationally conditioned in the arising of those (future) skandhas.

Verse 3

yadyamībhya ime 'nye syurebhyo vāmī pare yadi/
bhavetparakṛtaṃ duḥkhaṃ parairebhiramī kṛtaḥ//

If these (present) skandhas are different from those (future) skandhas or if the latter is other than the former, then there will be suffering caused by something else and those (future) skandhas will also be caused by it.

Verse 4

svapudgalakṛtaṃ duḥkhaṃ yadi duḥkhaṃ punarvinā/
svapudgalaḥ sa katamo yena duḥkhaṃ svayaṃ kṛtaṃ//

If suffering is caused by the individual himself, then the individual is separated from suffering. Who is this individual self which self-causes suffering?

Verse 5

parapudgalajaṃ duḥkhaṃ yadi yasmai pradīyate/
pareṇa kṛtvā tadduḥkhaṃ sa duḥkhena vinā kutaḥ//

If suffering is caused by another individual, where is this self which is separated from suffering but which is (seemingly) the recipient of the suffering caused by another?

Verse 6

parapudgalajaṃ duḥkhaṃ yadi kaḥ parapudgalaḥ/
vinā duḥkhena yaḥ kṛtvā parasmai prahiṇoti tat//

If suffering is caused by another individual, what is (the nature of) this individual which is separated from and yet causes and bestows suffering on the recipient?

Verse 7

svayaṃ kṛtasyāprasiddherduḥkhaṃ parakṛtaṃ kutaḥ/
paro hi duḥkhaṃ yatkuryāttattasya syātsvayaṃ kṛtaṃ//

As self-cause cannot be established, where can an other-caused suffering be? For, surely, an other-caused suffering is caused by that other itself.

Verse 8

na tāvatsvakṛtaṃ duḥkhaṃ na hi tenaiva tatkṛtaṃ/
paro nātmakṛtaścetsyādduḥkhaṃ parakṛtaṃ kathaṃ//

In truth then, there is no self-caused suffering for it cannot come about by itself. If an other does not bring about its own suffering, why is there an other-caused suffering?

Verse 9

syādubhābhyāṃ kṛtaṃ duḥkhaṃ syādekaikakṛtaṃ yadi/
parākārāsvayaṃkāraṃ duḥkhamahetukaṃ kutaḥ//

If suffering could be caused individually by one's self and by an other, then there should also be suffering caused jointly. Where is this non-causal suffering which is neither caused by itself nor by an other?

Verse 10

na kevalaṃ hi duḥkhasya cāturvidhyaṃ na vidyate/
bāhyānāmapi bhāvānāṃ cāturvidhyaṃ na vidyate//

Not only is the four-fold causal view of suffering impossible but the same is not possible with respect to the external elements of being.

CHAPTER XIII

Saṃskāra parīkṣā

Examination of Mental Conformation

The Tibetan title of this chapter has the term, *tattva* (*de ñid*) instead of *saṃskāra*, but as one goes through the verses there is a gradual shift from the concept of *saṃskāra* to the real meaning of *śūnyatā* or the nature of thusness. So, in this respect, the Tibetan title is more suggestive of the real content of the chapter and much more to the point. However, the term, *saṃskāra* is an old terminology employed from Early Buddhism and refers to the nascent mental force (i.e., a kind of mental *élan vital*). Stcherbatsky, interestingly enough, uses the suggestive term, "synergy" for *saṃskāra* in reference to the synthetic or synthesizing energy of life.

At the outset, Nāgārjuna strikes at the heart of the matter by saying that the Buddha condemned all conceptions arising from false discrimination of realities. This is, in fact, attributed to the nature of *saṃskāra* or mental conformation. The discussion then goes into the conceptions of self-nature (*svabhāva*) and varying nature (*anyathābhāva*), and their possible relationship. In neither case, however, does the argument prove any of their respective existences. Youth does not age in the strict sense and milk does not turn into butter. In other words, in the true Zen manner, youth is youth, age is age, milk is milk, and butter is butter. There is no strict conversion from one to the other. Thus the discussion inevitably arrives at the nature of thusness, *śūnyatā*, as the only true view of existence, but Nāgārjuna is quick to caution that *śūnyatā* is not subject to conceptualization.

Verse 1

tanmṛṣā moṣadharma yadbhagavānityabhāṣata/
sarve ca moṣadharmāṇaḥ saṃskārāstena te mṛṣā//

The Blessed One has said that elements with delusive nature are untrue. All mental conformations are delusive in nature. Therefore, they are untrue.

Verse 2

tanmṛṣā moṣadharma yadyadi kiṃ tatra muṣyate/
etattūktaṃ bhagavatā śūnyatāparidīpakaṃ//

If the elements with delusive nature are untrue, what is there which deludes? On account of this the Blessed One merely expounded the significance of *śūnyatā.*

Verse 3 (The opponent contends)

bhāvānāṃ niḥsvabhāvatvamanyathābhāvadarśanāt/
asvabhāvo bhāvo nāsti bhāvānāṃ śūnyatā yataḥ//

From the perception of varying natures all entities are without self-natures. An entity without self-nature does not exist because all entities have the nature of *śūnyatā.*

Verse 4 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

kasya syādanyathābhāvaḥ svabhāvaścenna vidyate/
kasya syādanyathābhāvaḥ svabhāvo yadi vidyate//

If self-nature does not exist, what is it that has this varying nature? (On the other hand), if self-nature does exist, again, what is it that has this varying nature?

Verse 5

tasyaiva nānyathābhāvo nāpyanyasyaiva yujyate/
yuvā na jīryate yasmādyasmājjīrṇo na jīryate//

It is not possible for this or another entity to have a varying nature. This is from the fact that youth does not age (over again).

Verse 6

tasya cedanyathābhāvaḥ kṣīrameva bhaveddadhi/
kṣīrādanyasya kasya ciddadhibhāvo bhaviṣyati//

If an entity does have a varying nature, then it will be possible for milk to become butter. But butter-nature will have to arise in something other than milk.

Verse 7

yadyaśūnyaṃ bhavetkiṃ citsyācchūnyamiti kiṃ cana/
na kiṃ cidastyaśūnyaṃ ca kutaḥ śūnyaṃ bhaviṣyati//

If something devoid of the nature of *śūnya* exists, then there also will be something else which may have the nature of *śūnya.* But as anything devoid of the nature of *śūnya* does not exist, how could there exist the nature of *śūnya?*

Verse 8

śūnyatā sarvadṛṣṭīnāṃ proktā niḥsaraṇaṃ jinaiḥ/
yeṣāṃ tu śūnyatādṛṣṭistānasādhyān babhāṣire//

The wise men (i.e., enlightened ones) have said that *śūnyatā* or the nature of thusness is the relinquishing of all false views. Yet it is said that those who adhere to the idea or concept of *śūnyatā* are incorrigible.

CHAPTER XIV

Saṃsarga parīkṣā

Examination of Combination or Union

This chapter discusses the concept of combination or union (*saṃsarga*) and once again Nāgārjuna resorts to the three temporal moments in discussing any concept or entity. Verse 1 has direct relationship to Chapter III which examines the six *āyatanas* (seats of sense perception) and Verse 2 to Chapter VI which examines the passion and the impassioned self. But quite explicit in the whole discussion is the fact that Nāgārjuna has in mind two ideas of the Mādhyamika Credo, i.e., with respect to non-identity and non-difference (*anekārtham anānārtham*). His argument is to show the absurdity of these ideas combining and evolving one from the other or from their identical or different natures. Thus, finally, he arrives at the conclusion that the presently combining (*saṃsṛjyamāna*), an already combined (*saṃsṛṣṭa*), and the agent which combines (*saṃsraṣṭṛ*) are untenable.

Verse 1

draṣṭavyaṃ darśanaṃ draṣṭā trīṇyetāni dviśo dviśaḥ/
sarvaśaśca na saṃsargamanyonyena vrajantyuta//

The three phases of the object perceived, the perceiving function, and the perceiver cannot mutually combine in two-fold senses or all together.

Note: The two-fold senses refer to: (1) The object and the perceiving function, (2) The perceiving function and perceiver, and (3) The perceiver and the object.

Verse 2

evaṃ rāgaśca raktaśca rañjanīyaṃ ca dṛśyatāṃ/
traidhena śeṣāḥ kleśāśca śeṣāṇyāyatanāni ca//

The passion, impassioned self, and the impassionable can be seen in the same manner. The rest of the *kleśas* (i.e., mental defilements) and *āyatanas* (i.e., seats of sense perception) depends on these three phases (for exposition).

Verse 3

anyenānyasya saṃsargastaccānyatvaṃ na vidyate/
draṣṭavyaprabhṛtīnāṃ yanna saṃsargaṃ vrajantyataḥ//

There is combination of something with something different. But there are (essentially) no different natures in the object perceived, etc. and these, therefore, cannot coalesce.

Verse 4

na ca kevalamanyatvaṃ draṣṭavyāderna vidyate/
kasya citkena citsārdhaṃ nānyatvamupapadyate//

Not only do different natures in the object perceived, etc., not exist, but it is also not possible for an entity to have a different nature jointly with another.

Verse 5

anyadanyatpratītyānyannānyadanyadṛte 'nyaḥ/
yatpratītya ca yattasmāttadanyannopapadyate//

Differentiation comes about by the relational conditions of different (entities) and it does not exist removed from them. And yet by virtue of the relational factor, there cannot be a differentiation between the entities involved.

Verse 6

yadyanyadanyadanyasmādanyasmādapyṛte bhavet/
tadanyadanyadanyasmādṛte nāsti ca nāstyataḥ//

If a different (entity) is different because it arises from another different (entity), then it will also exist removed from

the latter. But such a situation of a different (entity) cannot possibly exist.

Verse 7

nānyasmin vidyate 'nyatvamananyasmin na vidyate/
avidyamāne cānyatve nāstyanyadvā tadeva vā//

It is not possible for a differentiation to exist in a different or a non-different (entity). When a differentiation does not exist, difference and identity also do not exist.

Verse 8

na tena tasya saṃsargo nānyenānyasya yujyate/
saṃsṛjyamānaṃ saṃsṛṣṭaṃ saṃsraṣṭā ca na vidyate//

The combination of identical entities or of different entities is not justifiable. For, there cannot exist a presently combining, an already combined, and the agent which combines.

CHAPTER XV

Svabhāva parīkṣā

Examination of Self-nature

The Tibetan and Chinese versions have as similar titles the Examination of Being and Non-being (*bhāvābhāva, yu-wu* 有無). This may have been the older form but the present Sankrit title, nevertheless, does not detract anything from what is being discussed. Nāgārjuna here discusses the idea of self-nature or self-existence (*svabhāva*) and the possible ways of conceiving it. He introduces the interesting concept of extended or other nature (*parabhāva*) to show that it too cannot help in the understanding of the character of self-nature. It is interesting to note that Stcherbatsky translates *parabhāva* as relational existence with an eye, it seems, to capture the sense of relativity of objects.

In Verses Nos. 6 and 10 Nāgārjuna strikes at the heart of the matter by reassuring all that the truth expounded by the Buddha cannot be grasped by a play or interplay of concepts, such as, self-nature, extended nature, existence, or non-existence and that the wise should abandon all ideas which tend to treat existence in terms of static notions, such as, permanency (*śāśvata*) or interruption (*uccheda*), notions which are antithetic to the Mādhyamika Credo.

Verse 1

na saṃbhavaḥ svabhāvasya yuktaḥ pratyayahetubhiḥ/
hetupratyayasaṃbhūtaḥ svabhāvaḥ kṛtako bhavet//

> The rise of self-nature by relational and causal conditions is not justifiable. For, such a self-nature will have a character of being made or manipulated.

Verse 2

svabhāvaḥ kṛtako nāma bhaviṣyati punaḥ kathaṃ/
akṛtrimaḥ svabhāvo hi nirapekṣaḥ paratra ca//

How is it possible for the self-nature to take on the character of being made? For, indeed, the self-nature refers to something which cannot be made and has no mutual correspondence with something else.

Verse 3

kutaḥ svabhāvasyābhāve parabhāvo bhaviṣyati/
svabhāvaḥ parabhāvasya parabhāvo hi kathyate//

Where self-nature is non-existent, how could there be an extended nature? For, indeed, a self-nature which has the nature of being extended will be called an extended nature.

Note: *Parabhāva*, in the sense of extended nature, means that an entity has the existential character of extending or reaching over into the nature of other entities. It also means other-nature in contrast to self-nature. However, the argument obtains regardless of the translation.

Verse 4

svabhāvaparabhāvābhyāmṛte bhāvaḥ kutaḥ punaḥ/
svabhāve parabhāve vā sati bhāvo hi sidhyati//

Again, separated from self-nature and extended nature, how could existence be? For, indeed, existence establishes itself in virtue of either self-nature or extended nature.

Verse 5

bhāvasya cedaprasiddhirabhāvo naiva sidhyati/
bhāvasya hyanyathābhāvamabhāvaṃ bruvate janāḥ//

If existence does not come to be (i.e., does not establish itself), then certainly non-existence does not also. For, indeed, people speak of existence in its varying nature as non-existence.

Verse 6

svabhāvaṃ parabhāvaṃ ca bhāvaṃ cābhāvameva ca/
ye paśyanti na paśyanti te tattvaṃ buddhaśāsane//

Those who see (i.e., try to understand) the concepts of self-nature, extended nature, existence, or non-existence do not perceive the real truth in the Buddha's teaching.

Verse 7

kātyāyanāvavāde cāstīti nāstīti cobhayaṃ/
pratisiddhaṃ bhagavatā bhāvābhāvavibhāvinā//

According to the Instructions to Kātyāyana, the two views of the world in terms of being and non-being were criticized by the Buddha for similarly admitting the bifurcation of entities into existence and non-existence.

Note: The Sanskrit, Kātyāyanāvavāda, either refers to the sūtra or to the instruction given to Kātyāyama by the Buddha.

Verse 8

yadyastitvaṃ prakṛtyā syānna bhavedasya nāstitā/
prakṛteranyathābhāvo na hi jātūpapadyate//

If existence is in virtue of a primal nature, then its non-existence does not follow. For, indeed, a varying character of a primal nature is not possible at all.

Verse 9

prakṛtau kasya cāsatyāmanyathātvaṃ bhaviṣyati/
prakṛtau kasya ca satyāmanyathātvaṃ bhaviṣyati//

If primal nature does not exist, what will possess the varying character? If, on the other hand, primal nature does exist, what then will possess the varying character?

Note: The opponent raises the first question and Nāgārjuna counters with the second. He follows up with an answer in the next two verses.

Verse 10

astiti śāśvatagrāho nāstītyucchedadarśanam/
tasmādastitvanāstitve nāśrīyeta vicakṣaṇaḥ//

Existence is the grasping of permanency (i.e., permanent characteristics) and non-existence the perception of disruption. (As these functions are not strictly possible), the wise should not rely upon (the concepts of) existence and non-existence.

Verse 11

asti yaddhi svabhāvena na tannāstīti śāśvatam/
nāstīdānīmabhūtpūrvamityucchedaḥ prasajyate//

It follows that permanency means that existence based on self-nature does not become a non-entity and disruption means that what formerly was existent is now non-existent.

CHAPTER XVI

Bandhanamokṣa parīkṣā

Examination of Bondage and Release

This is the first chapter to discuss *nirvāṇa* and its implications A fuller treatment, of course, is reserved for Chapter XXV on the Examination of *Nirvāṇa* but here the general trend of the treatment is hinted at. All living beings are bound by defilements, i.e., by being caught up in the basic life-death process of *saṃsāra*. Is there a way out of all this bondage? To think in terms of a release or deliverance (*mokṣa*) from the bondage (*bandhana*) is not enough. Nāgārjuna again brings in his logic of *reductio ad absurdum* to demonstrate that what is already bound cannot be unbound, that what is unbound need not be bound, and that there cannot be any movement from one thing to another in what we understand as *saṃsāra*. As a consequence, there is nothing to be released or freed from a bound entity. Even conceptual knowledge works in a similar fashion for he says that those who believe in manipulating the concept of *nirvāṇa* have the gravest of all attachments (Verse 9) and that *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra* are beyond thought (Verse 10).

Verse 1

saṃskārāḥ saṃsaranti cenna nityāḥ saṃsaranti te/
saṃsaranti ca nānityāḥ sattve 'pyeṣa samaḥ kramaḥ//

> If mental conformations are transmigratory (i.e., as cyclic nature), they, as permanent entities, do not transmigrate. In fact, as impermanent entities, they also do not transmigrate. The same (relationship) also holds true for a sentient being.

Verse 2

pudgalaḥ saṃsarati cetskandhāyatanadhātuṣu/
pañcadhā mṛgyamāno 'sau nāsti kaḥ saṃsariṣyati//

If man's individuality is transmigratory with respect to the five-fold realms of skandhas, āyatanas and dhātus, then it is non-existent. What then does transmigrate?

Note: Reference is made to the five-fold function in man's action involving all the 5 *skandhas*, 12 *āyatanas*, and 18 *dhātus*. These activities are *saṃsāric* or migratory in nature.

Verse 3

upādānādupādānaṃ saṃsaran vibhavo bhavet/
vibhavaścānupādānaḥ kaḥ sa kiṃ saṃsariṣyati//

Anything moving from one (sensual) grasping to another will be without a body or form. How does a bodiless or non-grasping thing ever transmigrate?

Verse 4

saṃskārānāṃ na nirvāṇaṃ kathaṃ cidupapadyate/
sattvasyāpi na nirvāṇaṃ kathaṃ cidupadyate//

Why is it that *nirvāṇa* (or quiescence) is not possible with mental conformations? Also, why is it that even a sentient being is not possible of *nirvāṇa*?

Verse 5

na badhyante na mucyanta udayavyayadharmiṇaḥ/
saṃskārāḥ pūrvavatsattvo badhyate na na mucyate//

The mental conformations are endowed with the characteristics of production and extinction, and thus cannot be bound or attain release. Similarly, a sentient being cannot be bound or attain release.

Verse 6

bandhanaṃ cedupādānaṃ sopādāno na badhyate/
badhyate nānupādānaḥ kimavastho 'tha badhyate//

If (sensual) grasping per se is bound or restricted, then the grasping entity will be free from bonds. A non-grasping entity will also be free from bonds. Then, in what abiding condition is (one) bound?

Verse 7

badhnīyādbandhanaṃ kāmaṃ bandhyātpūrvaṃ bhavedyadi/
na cāsti tat śeṣamuktaṃ gamyamānagatāgataiḥ//

If bonds exist prior to the bondage, they could bind freely or at will. But this is not so. The other matters have already been discussed with respect to *gamyamāna*, *gata* and *agata*.

Note: The last remark refers to Chapter II where the problems on the three aspects are minutely discussed.

Verse 8

baddho na mucyate tāvadabaddho naiva mucyate/
syātāṃ baddhe mucyamāne yugapadbandhamokṣaṇe//

In truth, then, a bound entity cannot be released and it is so also with an unbound entity. If by chance a bound entity is in the process of being released, then bondage and release will be simultaneous phenomena.

Verse 9

nirvāsyāmyanupādāno nirvāṇaṃ me bhaviṣyati/
iti yeṣāṃ grahasteṣāmupādānamahāgrahaḥ//

Those who delight in maintaining, "Without the grasping, I will realize *nirvāṇa*; *Nirvāṇa* is in me;" are the very ones with the greatest grasping.

Verse 10

na nirvāṇasamāropo na saṃsārāpakarṣaṇaṃ/
yatra kastatra saṃsāro nirvāṇaṃ kiṃ vikalpyate//

Where *nirvāṇa* is not (subject to) establishment and *saṃsāra* not (subject to) disengagement, how will there be any conception of *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*?

CHAPTER XVII

Karmaphala parīkṣā

Examination of Action and Its Effect

The Tibetan version agrees with the Sanskrit in its title but in the Chinese version the title is simply the Examination of *karman* or Action. This is one of the more interesting chapters since it deals with the popular Buddhist concept of man's action. Man is always interested in the question of what past, present and future deeds or actions are and to what extent they are significant to present lives or to what extent they are controllable.

In this chapter Nāgārjuna first explains the types of *karman* in order to introduce and clarify the Buddha's teachings. He says that the Buddha spoke of two types of *karman*, i.e., one which is in the realm of thought (*cetanā*) and the other concerning thought in action (*cetayitvā*). The following diagram will illustrate the point:

cetanā ——— manasa-karman (thought)
cetayitvā < kāyika-karman (bodily)
vacika-karman (verbal)

He then brings in the ideas of permanency or constancy (*śāśvata*) and interruption or disruption (*uccheda*), relating these with the concept of *karman* and its effect. Employing the same type of logic (*prasaṅga*) as seen in previous chapters, he destroys any notion the opponent may have that a movement of anything from one place of action (e.g., *karman*) to another (e.g., *phala* or effect) is possible. With equal force he condemns any idea of an indestructible continuing action (*avipraṇāśā*) which gives the sense of continuity or transition in man's everyday life deeds. In Verse 20 he finally enunciates the true position of the Buddha who said that *śūnyatā* is

not disruption (*uccheda*) and that *saṃsāra* is not permanency (*śāśvata*). Nothing is interrupted, fixed, gained, lost, or passed over to another. As a consequence, it is of no use speaking of *karman* and its effect, of *kleśas*, of bodily entities, etc., for they are all false peregrinations of the mind. Incidentally, verses 1–19 contain the popular views on *karman*.

Verse 1

ātmasaṃyamakaṃ cetaḥ parānugrāhakaṃ ca yat/
maitraṃ sa dharmastadbījaṃ phalasya pretya ceha ca//

Self-restraint, kindness towards others, and benevolence are the ways of the *dharma* (i.e., the truth of the nature of things). They are the seeds which bear fruit in this as well as the next realm of life.

Verse 2

cetanā cetayitvā ca karmoktaṃ paramarṣiṇā/
tasyānekavidho bhedaḥ karmaṇāḥ parikīrtitaḥ//

The Great Sage has said that *karman* is (in the nature of) thought as well as thought in action, and that there are many distinct varieties of *karman*.

Verse 3

tatra yaccetanetyuktaṃ karma tanmānasaṃ smṛtaṃ/
cetayitvā ca yattūktaṃ tattu kāyikavācikaṃ//

The *karman* which has been described as thought (*cetanā*) indicates the mental and volitional aspects and that which has been described as thought in action (*cetayitvā*) refers to the bodily and verbal aspects.

Verse 4

vāgvispando 'viratayo yāścāvijñaptisaṃjñitāḥ/
avijñaptaya evānyāḥ smṛtā viratayastathā//

Words, actions, the indescribable non-abandonment as well as what is asserted to be another form of the indescribable abandonment,....(This verse continues on to the next.)

Verse 5

paribhogānvayaṃ puṇyamapuṇyaṃ ca tathāvidhaṃ/
cetanā ceti saptaite dharmāḥ karmāñjanāḥ smṛtāḥ//

....virtuous and non-virtuous elements associated with enjoyment of being (*paribhoga*), and thought itself, these are the seven *dharmas* which give rise to *karman*.

Verse 6

tiṣṭhatyāpākakālāccetkarma tannityatāmiyāt/
niruddhaṃ cennirrudhaṃ satkiṃ phalaṃ janayiṣyati//

If *karman* endures at any time in the maturing process, then it will be of the nature of permanent endurance. But if it ceases to be, how could anything ceased (or spent) give rise to an effect?

Verse 7

yo 'ṅkuraprabhṛtirbījātsaṃtāno 'bhipravartate/
tataḥ phalamṛte bījātsa ca nābhipravartate//

A continuity which begins in a sprout, etc., comes forth from a seed and thereby takes on the nature of an effect, but separated from the seed the continuity could never arise.

Verse 8

bījācca yasmātsaṃtānaḥ saṃtānācca phalodbhavaḥ/
bījapūrvaṃ phalaṃ tasmānnocchinnaṃ nāpi śāśvataṃ//

Since continuity comes forth from seed and effect from continuity, there is always a seed prior to the effect. Therefore, there is no interruption and also no constancy.

Verse 9

yastasmāccittasaṃtānaścetaso 'bhipravartate/
tataḥ phalamṛte cittātsa ca nābhipravartate//

Thereupon, thought continuity comes forth from the existence of mind and in consequence the effect. Without the mind, continuity cannot arise.

Verse 10

cittācca yasmātsaṃtānaḥ saṃtānācca phalodbhavaḥ/
karmapūrvaṃ phalaṃ tasmānnocchinnaṃ nāpi śāśvatam//

Since continuity comes forth from the mind and the effect from continuity, there is *karman* (of the mind) prior to the effect. Therefore, there is no interruption and also no constancy.

Verse 11

dharmasya sādhanopāyāḥ śuklāḥ karmapathā daśa/
phalaṃ kāmaguṇāḥ paṃca dharmasya pretya ceha ca//

The ten paths of pure action are the means of realizing the *dharma*. The effects (i.e., fruits) of the *dharma* of this as well as the next realm of life are the five sensual enjoyments.

Note: The ten pure actions refer to carrying out the following: non-killing, non-stealing, non-adultery, non-lying, non-duplicity, non-evil talk, non-odd talk, non-greed, non-hatred, and non-false view.

Verse 12

bahavaśca mahāntaśca doṣāḥ syurapi kalpanā/
yadyeṣā tena naivaiṣā kalpanātropapadyate//

If conceptualizations are permitted there will arise many as well as great errors. Therefore, they are not permissible (or possible) here.

Verse 13

imāṃ punaḥ pravakṣyāmi kalpanāṃ yātra yojyate/
buddhaiḥ pratyekabuddhaiśca śrāvakaiścānuvarṇitāṃ//

I will here relate about certain appropriate conceptualizations which have been praised (i.e., sanctioned) by the *Buddhas*, *Pratyekabuddhas* and *Śrāvakas*.

Verse 14

pattraṃ yathā 'vipraṇāśastathārṇamiva karma ca/
caturvidho dhātutaḥ sa prakṛtyā 'vyākṛtaśca saḥ//

An imperishable continuing action is like a document (i.e., in constant force) and a *karman* is like an obligation (i.e., a discharge of duty). The imperishable continuing action is four-fold from the standpoint of the realms of action (*dhātu*) and is indeterminate from the standpoint of primal substance (*prakṛti*).

Note: Reference is made to the four-fold realms of desire (*kāma*), materiality (*rūpa*), immateriality (*arūpa*), and transcendent of sense attachment (*anāsrava*).

Verse 15

prahāṇato na praheyo bhāvanāheya eva vā/
tasmādavipraṇāśena jāyate karmaṇāṃ phalaṃ//

It (i.e., the imperishable continuing action) is not abandoned by simple abandonment but by the virtuous practical actions. Therefore, the fruits of *karman* come forth from the imperishable continuing action.

Verse 16

prahāṇataḥ praheyaḥ syātkarmaṇaḥ saṃkrameṇa vā/
yadi doṣāḥ prasajyeraṃstatra karmavadhādayaḥ//

If it is abandoned by simple abandonment or by the transformation of the *karman*, then there necessarily follows such errors as the denial of *karman*, etc.

Verse 17

sarveṣāṃ viṣabhāgānāṃ sabhāgānāṃ ca karmaṇāṃ/
pratisaṃdhau sadhātūnāmeka utpadyate tu saḥ//

When all the similar and dissimilar *karmans* come together in a realm, there will arise only one imperishable continuing action.

Verse 18

karmaṇaḥ karmaṇo dṛṣte dharma utpadyate tu saḥ/
dviprakārasya sarvasya vipakve 'pi ca tiṣṭhati//

The imperishable continuing action will arise in the present, correspondingly with respect to all the two-fold nature (i.e., similar and dissimilar) of the *karmans*. It will also endure in its maturing state.

Verse 19

phalavyatikramādvā sa maraṇādva nirudhyate/
anāsravaṃ sāsravaṃ vibhāgaṃ tatra lakṣayet//

The imperishable continuing action ceases to be when it has gone beyond (i.e., exhausted) the effects or met with death. Here a distinction must be made between worldly attachments (*sāsrava*) and supra- worldly non-attachments (*anāsrava*).

Verse 20 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

śūnyatā ca na cocchedaḥ saṃsāraśca na śāśvataṃ/
karmaṇo 'vipraṇāśaśca dharmo buddhena deśitaḥ//

The imperishable continuing action spoken of by the Buddha is *śūnyatā* and not *uccheda* (interruption), *saṃsāra* and *śāśvata* (constancy).

Verse 21

karma notpadyate kasmāt niḥsvabhāvaṃ yatastataḥ/
yasmācca tadanutpannaṃ na tasmādvipraṇaśyati//

The reason why *karman* does not arise is that it is without a self-nature (*niḥsvabhāva*). As it does not arise there is no perishing.

Verse 22

karma svabhāvataścetsyācchāśvataṃ syādasaṃśayaṃ/
akṛtaṃ ca bhavetkarma kriyate na hi śāśvataṃ//

If *karman* has self-nature then undoubtedly it will have the nature of constancy and will also be uncreated. However, anything characterized by constancy does not create.

Verse 23

akṛtābhyāgamabhayaṃ syātkarmākṛtakaṃ yadi/
abrahmacaryavāsaśca doṣastatra prasajyate//

If an uncreated *karman* exists then there will be apprehensive (acts) without any creation. And a fallacy would result in which there will be no dwelling upon (i.e., carrying on) the ways of the Brahman.

Verse 24

vyavahārā virudhyante sarva eva na saṃśayaḥ/
puṇyapāpakṛtornaiva pravibhāgaśca yujyate//

All common practices would, no doubt, be destroyed for it follows that no distinction between the virtuous and evil doers could be made.

Verse 25

tadvipakvavipākaṃ ca punareva vipakṣyati/
karma vyavasthitaṃ yasmāttasmātsvābhāvikaṃ yadi//

If *karman* is a fixed thing (i.e., enduring) because of its self-nature, then a maturity that is already matured will again seek maturity.

Verse 26

karma kleśātmakaṃ cedaṃ te ca kleśā va tattvataḥ/
na cette tattvataḥ kleṣāḥ karma syāttattvataḥ kathaṃ//

This *karman* will have the nature of defilements (*kleśas*) and these, in turn, will not be in the nature of truth (*tattva*). But if the defilements are not in the nature of truth, how could *karman* be in the nature of truth?

Verse 27

karma kleśāśca dehānāṃ pratyayāḥ samudāhṛtāḥ/
karma kleśāśca te śūnyā yadi deheṣu kā kathā//

It is said that *karman* and defilements are a co-operating conditionality of differing bodies. But if *karman* and defilements are of the nature of *śūnya* (i.e., thusness or "void"), what could be said of these bodies?

Verse 28 (The opponent contends)

avidyānivṛto jantustṛṣṇāsaṃyojanaśca saḥ/
sa bhoktā sa ca na karturanyo na ca sa eva saḥ//

The sentient being beclouded by ignorance is a bundle of cravings. He is the percipient (i.e., experiencer of *karmaic* effects). He is neither identical to nor different from the doer.

Verse 29 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

na pratyayasamutpannaṃ nāpratyayasamutthitaṃ/
asti yasmādidaṃ karma tasmātkartāpi nāstyataḥ//

Since *karman* does not arise by means of relational or non-relational conditionality, there is also no doer.

Verse 30

karma cennāsti kartā ca kutaḥ syātkarmajaṃ phalaṃ/
asatyatha phale bhoktā kuta eva bhaviṣyati//

If there is neither *karman* nor doer, where could the effect arising from the *karman* be? Where there is no effect, how could there be any percipient (i.e., experiencer)?

Verse 31

yathā nirmitakaṃ śāstā nirmimita rddhisaṃpadā/
nirmito nirmimītānyaṃ sa ca nirmitakaḥ punaḥ//

It is as if a master, by his supernormal powers, were to form a figure and this figure, in turn, were to form another figure....(continues on to the next verse).

Verse 32

tathā nirmitakākāraḥ kartā yatkarma tatkṛtaṃ/
tadyathā nirmitenānyo nirmito nirmitastathā//

In exactly the same way, the doer is like the formed figure and his action (*karman*) is like the other figure formed by the first.

Verse 33

kleśāḥ karmāṇi dehāśca kartāraśca phalāni ca/
gandharvanagarākārā marīcisvapnasaṃnibhāḥ//

Defilements, *karmans*, bodily entities, doers and effects are all similar to the nature of an imaginary city in the sky, a mirage, and a dream.

CHAPTER XVIII

Ātma parīkṣā

Examination of the Bifurcated Self

The Chinese title is the Examination of the Factors of Existence (*dharma, fa* 法) and the Tibetan is the Examination of the Existence of Self and Factors of Existence (*Bdag daṅ chos brtag pa; Ātma-dharma parīkṣā*). This chapter discusses the concept of *ātman* which had been hinted at in the previous chapter on *karman*. It is one of the more important chapters dealing with man's self and, eventually, as one would expect, Nāgārjuna argues on the non-existence of *ātman*. In the opening verse he quickly destroys any idea that the *ātman* can be equated with the skandhas and concludes that they are logically untenable. The bifurcated self (*ātman*), self-hood (*ātmīya*), self-identity (*mama*) and individuality (*ahaṃkāra*) are all mental constructions and detrimental to the attainment of *mokṣa* or release. The Buddha only employs the term, *ātman*, provisionally for he is actually interested in teaching the truth (*tattva*) of *anātman*. Truth is non-relational, non-descriptive, non-differential....it is thatness or thusness. In Verse 8 Nāgārjuna introduces the famed Four-cornered logic (*szu-chü lun-fa* 四句論法, *catuṣkoṭikā*), i.e., the possible conditions of is, is not, both is and is not, and neither is nor is not, in order to exhibit the fact that final truth transcends all these possibilities; it is *śūnyatā* per se.

Verse 1

ātmā skandhā yadi bhavedudayavyayabhāgbhavet/
skandhebhyo 'nyo yadi bhavedbhavedaskandhalakṣaṇaḥ//

If the bifurcated self (*ātman*) is constitutive of *skandhas*, it will be endowed with the nature of origination and destruc-

tion. If it is other than the *skandhas* it will not be endowed with the latter's characteristics.

Note: The *skandhas* refer to the five constituents of being or existence, i.e., *rūpa* (material form), *vedanā* (feeling), *saṃjña* (awareness), *saṃskāra* (mental conformation), and *vijñāna* (conscious play).

Verse 2

ātmanyasati cātmīyaṃ kuta eva bhaviṣyati/
nirmamo nirahaṃkāraḥ śamādātmātmanīnayoḥ//

Where the bifurcated self does not exist, how could there be a self-hood (*ātmīya*)? From the fact that the bifurcated self and self-hood are (in their basic nature) quiescence, there is no self-identity (*mama*) or individuality (*ahaṃkāra*).

Verse 3

nirmano nirahaṃkāro yaśca so 'pi na vidyate//
nirmamaṃ nirahaṃkāraṃ yaḥ paśyati na paśyati//

Any entity without individuality and self-identity does not exist. Whosoever sees (it with) non-individuality and non-self-identity cannot see or grasp (the truth).

Verse 4

mametyahamiti kṣīṇe bahirdhādhyātmameva ca/
nirudhyata upādānaṃ tatkṣayājjanmanaḥ kṣayaḥ//

Grasping ceases to be where, internally and externally, (the ideas of) individuality and self-identity are destroyed. From the cessation of grasping the cessation of birth also follows.

Verse 5

karmakleśakṣayānmokṣa karmakleśā vikalpataḥ/
te prapañcātprapañcastu śūnyatāyāṃ nirudhyate//

There is *mokṣa* (release or liberation) from the destruction of *karmaic* defilements which are but conceptualization. These arise from mere conceptual play (*prapañca*) which are in turn banished in *śūnyatā*.

Verse 6

ātmetyapi prajñapitamanātmetyapi deśitaṃ/
buddhairnātmā na cānātmā kaścidityapi deśitaṃ//

The Buddhas have provisionally employed the term *ātman* and instructed on the true idea of *anātman.* They have also taught that any (abstract) entity as *ātman* or *anātman* does not exist.

Verse 7

nivṛttamabhidhātavyaṃ nivṛtte cittagocare/
anutpannāniruddhā hi nirvāṇamiva dharmatā//

Where mind's functional realm ceases, the realm of words also ceases. For, indeed, the essence of existence (*dharmatā*) is like *nirvāṇa*, without origination and destruction.

Verse 8

sarvaṃ tathyaṃ na vā tathyaṃ tathyaṃ cātathyameva ca/
naivātathyaṃ naiva tathyametadbuddhānuśāsanaṃ//

Everything is suchness (*tathyam*), not suchness, both suchness and not suchness, and neither suchness nor not suchness. This is the Buddha's teaching.

Verse 9

aparapratyayaṃ śāntaṃ prapañcairaprapañcitaṃ/
nirvikalpamanānārthametattattvasya lakṣaṇam//

Non-conditionally related to any entity, quiescent, non-conceptualized by conceptual play, non-discriminative, and non-differentiated. These are the characteristics of reality (i.e., descriptive of one who has gained the Buddhist truth)

Verse 10

pratītya yadyadbhavati na hi tāvattadeva tat/
na cānyadapi tasmānnocchinnaṃ nāpi śāśvataṃ//

Any existence which is relational is indeed neither identical to nor different from the related object. Therefore, it is neither interruption nor constancy.

Verse 11

anekārthamanānārthamanucchedamaśāśvataṃ/
etattallokanāthānāṃ buddhānāṃ śāsanāmṛtaṃ//

"Non-identity, non-differentiation, non-interruption and non-continuity." These are the immortal teachings of the world's patron *Buddhas*.

Verse 12

saṃbuddhānāmanutpāde śrāvakāṇāṃ punaḥ kṣaye/
jñānaṃ pratyekabuddhānāmasaṃsargātpravartate//

Where the accomplished *Buddhas* do not appear and the *Śrāvakas* cease to be, the enlightened mind of the *Pratyeka-buddhas* comes forth from independent disengagement (of the bifurcated self).

Note: This verse subtly shows that human beings are all potential pratyekabuddhas who independently could attain a higher form of knowledge or realize the truth of things (*tattva*).

CHAPTER XIX

Kāla parīkṣā

Examination of Time

This relatively short chapter strikes at the core of the matter of temporal moments in existence. Since the analysis made in Chapter II on the Examination of *gata*, *agata*, and *gamyamāna* is presupposed, the discussion here is necessarily simplified and brief. Nāgārjuna omits the fine analysis of the three temporal moments and almost immediately argues for the non-existence of the time-concept from the temporal as well as existential standpoints.

Verse 1

pratyutpanno 'nāgataśca yadyatītamapekṣya hi/
pratyutpanno 'nāgataśca kāle 'tīte bhaviṣyataḥ//

> If, indeed, the present and future are contingently related to the past, they should exist in the past moment.

Verse 2

pratyutpanno 'nāgataśca na stastatra punaryadi/
pratyutpanno 'nāgataśca syātāṃ kathamapekṣya taṃ//

> If, again, the present and future do not exist there (i.e., in the past), how could they be contingently related?

Verse 3

anapekṣya punaḥ siddhirnātītaṃ vidyate tayoḥ/
pratyutpanno 'nāgataśca tasmātkālo na vidyate//

> Again, it is not possible for both (present and future) to establish themselves without being contingent on a past. Therefore, there is no justification for the existence of a present and a future time.

Verse 4

etenaivāvaśiṣṭau dvau krameṇa parivartakau/
uttamādhamamadhyādīnekatvādīṃśca lakṣayet//

It follows from the above analysis that the remainder of the two periods likewise can be taken up and that concepts such as above, below, middle, etc. or identity, etc. can be similarly described or treated.

Note: This means that the analysis can be made similarly by using the present and the future in turn as a base and relating each to the other two temporal periods. Similar analysis holds true for the other concepts mentioned.

Verse 5

nāsthito gṛhyate kālaḥ sthitaḥ kālo na vidyate/
yo gṛhyetāgṛhitaśca kālaḥ prajñapyate katham//

A non-enduring time cannot be manipulated. But an enduring time, although manipulatable, does not exist. How could a non-manipulatable time be grasped (i.e., conceptualized)?

Verse 6

bhāvaṃ pratītya kālaścetkālo bhāvādṛte kutaḥ/
na ca kaścana bhāvo 'sti kutaḥ kālo bhaviṣyati//

If time exists in virtue of the relational existential structure, where can it be without the structure? As any existential structure does not exist, where can time be?

CHAPTER XX

Sāmagrī parīkṣā

Examination of Assemblage

The Tibetan and Chinese versions both have their titles as the Examination of Cause and Effect (*Hetuphala; Rgyu daṅ hbras bu brtag pa*). The content of the chapter certainly reveals the relationship between these two concepts but it also treats the concept of assemblage (*sāmagrī*). It would seem, however, that Nāgārjuna's treatment places greater emphasis on the idea of assemblage where various relational conditions (*pratyaya*), cause, and effect come together or exist in concomitance. He naturally utilizes the other concepts in order to show the impossibility of attaching any subsisting nature to any one of them, i.e., hinting at all times that existence or being per se is beyond descriptive manipulation. Therefore, he goes through all the possible combinations of cause and effect (Verses 12, 13, 14) in their temporal moments in order to demonstrate the inconceivability of both being together within an assemblage. The question of void (*śūnya*) is then introduced but again he shows that any conceptualization of it falls into error. Consequently, nothing can be asserted of either cause or effect in assemblage or of assemblage without cause and effect. The ideas expressed here are closely related to those found in Chapters I & XIV.

Verse 1

hetośca pratyayānāṃ ca sāmagryā jāyate yadi/
phalamasti ca sāmagryāṃ sāmagryā jāyate kathaṃ//

If the effect (i.e., arisen entity or fruit) comes about from the assemblage of cause and relational conditions and exists

within such an assemblage, in what manner does it come about in the assemblage?

Verse 2

hetośca pratyayānāṃ ca sāmagryā jāyate yadi/
phalaṃ nāsti ca sāmagryāṃ sāmagryā jāyate kathaṃ//

If the effect comes about from the assemblage of cause and relational conditions, and it does not exist within such an assemblage, in what manner does it come about in the assemblage?

Verse 3

hetośca pratyayānāṃ ca sāmagryāmasti cetphalaṃ/
gṛhyeta nanu sāmagryāṃ sāmagryāṃ ca na gṛhyate//

If the effect is in the assemblage of cause and relational conditions, it should be conceivable within the assemblage. However, (the fact is) it is inconceivable within an assemblage.

Verse 4

hetośca pratyayānāṃ ca sāmagryāṃ nāsti cetphalaṃ/
hetavaḥ pratyayāśca syurahetupratyayaiḥ samāḥ//

If the effect is not in the assemblage of cause and relational conditions, then the causes and relational conditions would be similar to non-causal and non-relational conditions.

Verse 5

hetukaṃ phalasya dattvā yadi heturnirudhyate/
yaddattaṃ yanniruddhaṃ ca hetorātmadvayaṃ bhavet//

If the cause gives to the effect a causal nature before extinguishing itself, then there will be a dual causal form of the given and the extinguished.

Verse 6

hetuṃ phalasyādattvā ca yadi heturnirudhyate/
hetau niruddhe jātaṃ tatphalamāhetukaṃ bhavet//

If, however, the cause does not give the effect a causal nature before extinguishing itself, then the effect, arising after the cause extinguishes itself, will have no cause.

Verse 7

phalaṃ sahaiva sāmagryā yadi prādurbhavetpunaḥ/
ekakālau prasajyete janako yaśca janyate//

If, again, the effect and the assemblage appear together, then it would follow that the producer and the produced are contemporaneous (i.e., exist in the same moment).

Verse 8

pūrvameva ca sāmagryāḥ phalaṃ prādurbhavetyadi/
hetupratyayanirmuktaṃ phalamāhetukaṃ bhavet//

Moreover, if the effect appears prior to the assemblage, then it, without cause and relational condition, will have a non-causal nature.

Verse 9

niruddhe cetphalaṃ hetau hetoḥ samkramaṇaṃ bhavet/
pūrvajātasya hetośca punarjanma prasajyate//

If the effect is taken to be the transition of a cause which had extinguished itself, then it follows that the cause would be a re-origination of an already originated cause.

Verse 10

janayetphalamutpannaṃ niruddho 'staṃgataḥ kathaṃ/
tiṣṭhannāpi kathaṃ hetuḥ phalena janayedvṛtaḥ//

How could an already extinguished cause give rise to an already arisen effect? Again, how could a cause which is concomitant with an effect give rise to the latter?

Verse 11

athāvṛtaḥ phalenāsau katamajjanayetphalaṃ/
na hyadṛṣṭvā vā dṛṣṭvā vā heturjanayate phalaṃ//

On the other hand, what kind of an effect would result from a cause without the nature of concomitance? For, a cause will not give rise to an effect regardless of whether the latter is projected or unprojected.

Note: Projected and unprojected are peculiar translations for *dṛṣṭvā* and *adṛṣṭvā* respectively and they refer to the state of ontological relationship or non-relationship from the standpoint of a cause and its effect.

Verse 12

nātītasya hyatītena phalasya saha hetunā/
nājātena na jātena saṃgatirjātu vidyate//

Indeed, it is not possible to have an union of a past effect with a past cause nor with a future and present cause.

Note: This verse as well as the following two refer to the three possible combinations of an effect with respect to its past, present, and future conditions.

Verse 13

na jātasya hyajātena phalasya saha hetunā/
nātītena na jātena saṃgatirjātu vidyate//

Indeed, it is not possible to have an union of a present effect with a future cause nor with a past and present cause.

Verse 14

nājātasya hi jātena phalasya saha hetunā/
nājātena na naṣṭena saṃgatirjātu vidyate//

Indeed, it is not possible to have an union of a future effect with a present cause nor with a future and past cause.

Verse 15

asatyāṃ saṃgatau hetuḥ kathaṃ janayate phalaṃ/
satyāṃ vā saṃgatau hetuḥ kathaṃ janayate phalaṃ//

Without partaking in an union, how could a cause give rise to an effect? But again, with the partaking in a union, how could a cause give rise to an effect?

Verse 16

hetuḥ phalena śūnyaścetkathaṃ janayate phalaṃ/
hetuḥ phalenāśūnyaścetkathaṃ janayate phalaṃ//

If a cause is a void (*śūnya*) with respect to an effect, how could it give rise to the effect? If, on the other hand, a cause is not a void with respect to an effect, how could it give rise to the effect?

Verse 17

phalaṃ notpatsyate 'śūnyamaśūnyaṃ na nirotsyate/
aniruddhamanutpannamaśūnyaṃ tadbhaviṣyati//

An effect which is a non-void (*aśūnya*) will not arise nor extinguish itself. For, that which is a non-void will be non-arising and non-extinguishing.

Verse 18

kathamutpatsyate śūnyaṃ kathaṃ śūnyaṃ nirotsyate/
śūnyamapyaniruddhaṃ tadanutpannaṃ prasajyate//

How could an effect which is a void (*śūnya*) either arise or extinguish itself? Again it necessarily follows that that which is a void will be non-arising and non-extinguishing.

Verse 19

hetoḥ phalasya caikatvaṃ na hi jātūpapadyate//
hetoḥ phalasya cānyatvaṃ na hi jātūpapadyate//

It is not possible, indeed, for a cause and an effect to be identical. But again, it is not possible indeed for them to be different.

Verse 20

ekatve phalahetvoḥ syādaikyaṃ janakajanyayoḥ/
pṛthaktve phalahetvoḥ syāttulyo heturahetunā//

If the cause and effect were identical there would be an identity of the producer and the produced. If they were

different, however, then the cause would be the same as a non-causal cause.

Verse 21

phalaṃ svabhāvasadbhūtaṃ kiṃ heturjanayiṣyati/
phalaṃ svabhāvāsadbhūtaṃ kiṃ heturjanayiṣyati//

How could a cause give rise to an effect which in its own nature is a complete being? But again, how could a cause give rise to an effect which in its own nature is an incomplete being?

Verse 22

na cājanayamānasya hetutvamupapadyate/
hetutvānupapattau ca phalaṃ kasya bhaviṣyati//

Moreover, a cause without a productive nature cannot be a cause. In the absence of such a productive nature, where will the effect be?

Verse 23

na ca pratyayahetūnāmiyamātmānamātmanā/
yā sāmagrī janayate sā kathaṃ janayetphalaṃ//

As the assemblage of causes and relational conditions does not in virtue of itself produce itself, how could it produce an effect?

Verse 24

na sāmagrīkṛtaṃ phalaṃ nāsāmagrīkṛtaṃ phalaṃ/
asti pratyayasāmagrī kuta eva phalaṃ vinā//

There is no effect created either by an assemblage or by a non-assemblage of causes and relational conditions. Separated from an effect, where indeed is the assemblage of relational conditions?

CHAPTER XXI

Saṃbhavavibhava parīkṣā

Examination of Occurrence and Dissolution of Existence

The title refers to the concepts of occurrence (*saṃbhava*) and dissolution (*vibhava*) of being. In the argument which follows Nāgārjuna has in mind the real meaning of human existence. In other words, the two concepts must be understood in the sense of occurring or coming into existence and dissolving or going out of existence in the context of true existence. He goes through the usual process of discussing the two concepts in relationship to each other with reference to the three temporal moments. In each instance there is no justification for asserting any of the concepts; that is to say, any dogmatically contended assertion can always be led to the realm of absurdity.

It might just be a projection but it would seem that Nāgārjuna makes an illuminating point when he introduces the subtle difference between the terms, *bhāva* and *bhava*. *Bhava* refers to the general state or nature of existence of any entity or organism. In this sense, it connotes something of the nature of an enduring or static quality. This conception is what most of us profess to understand as the basis for the existence of all things. Such an understanding, however, comes from a deluded mind and it is here that Nāgārjuna goes on to show that there is another realm or aspect of being which people have always overlooked. This is the realm or aspect of *bhāva*. *Bhāva* refers to the truly dynamic worldly existence, i.e., it refers to the Buddhist fundamental conception of the continuity of becomingness of ordinary life. This becomingness or *bhāva* is a fact which no amount of conceptualization will ever be able to analyze or fathom. It will "cease" only in *nirvāṇa*.

Verse 1

vinā vā saha vā nāsti vibhavaḥ saṃbhavena vai/
vinā vā saha vā nāsti saṃbhavo vibhavena vai//

Dissolution does not exist either separated from or concurrent with the occurrence of being. Occurrence, likewise, does not exist either separated from or concurrent with its dissolution.

Verse 2

bhaviṣyati kathaṃ nāma vibhavaḥ saṃbhavaṃ vinā/
vinaiva janma maraṇaṃ vibhavo nodbhavaṃ vinā//

How could there be dissolution separated from the occurrence of being? (As there would be the improbable phenomenon of) death without birth, there is no dissolution without occurrence.

Verse 3

saṃbhavenaiva vibhavaḥ kathaṃ saha bhaviṣyati/
na janmamaraṇaṃ caivaṃ tulyakālaṃ hi vidyate//

How could there be dissolution concurrent with the occurrence of being? For, indeed, it is not possible for both birth and death to exist simultaneously.

Verse 4

bhaviṣyati kathaṃ nāma saṃbhavo vibhavaṃ vinā/
anityatā hi bhāveṣu na kadācinna vidyate//

How could there be occurrence separated from the dissolution of being? For in the various modes of (true) existence, transient nature is never found not to exist.

Verse 5

saṃbhavo vibhavenaiva kathaṃ saha bhaviṣyati/
na janmamaraṇaṃ caivaṃ tulyakālaṃ hi vidyate//

How could there be occurrence concurrent with the dissolution of being? For, indeed, it is not possible for both birth and death to exist simultaneously.

Verse 6

sahānyonyena vā siddhirvinānyonyena vā yayoḥ/
na vidyate tayoḥ siddhiḥ kathaṃ nu khalu vidyate//

The establishment of mutual concurrence or mutual separation is an impossibility. How then would it ever be possible to assert any completed states of the two?

Verse 7

kṣayasya saṃbhavo nāsti nākṣyasyāsti saṃbhavaḥ/
kṣayasya vibhavo nāsti vibhavo nākṣayasya ca//

There is no occurrence of being in either a ceased or an unceased entity. Again, there is no dissolution of being in either a ceased or an unceased entity.

Verse 8

saṃbhavo vibhavaścaiva vinā bhāvaṃ na vidyate/
saṃbhavaṃ vibhavaṃ caiva vinā bhāvo na vidyate//

Occurrence and dissolution are not possible apart from (true) existence. On the other hand, (true) existence is not possible apart from occurrence and dissolution.

Verse 9

saṃbhavo vibhavaścaiva na śūnyasyopapadyate/
saṃbhavo vibhavaścaiva nāśūnyasyopapadyate//

Occurrence and dissolution cannot exist in the nature of void (*śūnya*). They cannot exist in the nature of non-void either.

Verse 10

saṃbhavo vibhavaścaiva naika ityupapadyate/
saṃbhavo vibhavaścaiva na nānetyupapadyate//

It is not possible that occurrence and dissolution are identical. They cannot be different either.

Verse 11

dṛśyate saṃbhavaścaiva vibhavaścaiva te bhavet/
dṛśyate saṃbhavaścaiva mohādvibhava eva ca//

You may think that both occurrence and dissolution can be perceived but such a perception only comes about from a deluded mind.

Verse 12

na bhāvājjāyate bhāvo bhāvo 'bhāvānna jāyate/
nābhāvājjāyate 'bhāvo 'bhāvo bhāvānna jāyate//

(True) existence does not arise from itself nor does it arise from non-existence. Again, non-existence does not arise from itself nor does it arise from existence.

Verse 13

na svato jāyate bhāvaḥ parato naiva jāyate/
na svataḥ parataścaiva jāyate jāyate kutaḥ//

(True) existence arises neither by itself nor by an other. It does not arise by both (forces). How then does it arise?

Verse 14

bhāvamabhyupapannasya śāśvatocchedadarśanaṃ/
prasajyate sa bhāvo hi nityo 'nityo 'tha vā bhavet//

One who admits existence will necessarily perceive permanence and disruption. For, it necessarily follows that such an existence must either be permanent or impermanent.

Note: This idea was discussed in XV, 10, 11.

Verse 15 (The opponent contends)

bhāvamabhyupapannasya naivocchedo na śāśvataṃ/
udayavyayasaṃtānaḥ phalahetvorbhavaḥ sa hi//

On the other hand, as one admits (true) existence there could be no permanence or disruption. For, such an existence expresses the continuity in the rise and fall (i.e., disintegration) of a being in a cause-effect relationship.

Note: *Bhava* and *bhāva* appear. The difference is subtle. *Bhava* refers to the state or nature of ordinary existence and connotes an enduring or subsisting entity. *Bhāva*, on the other hand, refers to true worldly existence, to the state of continuity of becomingness in life process. Whether the difference was made advertently or inadvertently remains conjectural. It may have been simply a typographical error.

Verse 16 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

udayavyayasaṃtānaḥ phalahetvorbhavaḥ sa cet/
vyayasyāpunarutpatterhetūccehedaḥ prasajyate//

If such an existence expresses the continuity in the rise and fall (i.e., disintegration) of a being in a cause-effect relationship, then, since the fall does not have the nature of arising again, it will necessarily be the disruption of cause.

Verse 17

sadbhāvasya svabhāvena nāsadbhāvaśca yujyate/
nirvāṇakāle cocchedaḥ praśamādbhavasaṃtateḥ//

It is not justifiable to assert that an existence in virtue of self-nature becomes a non-existence. For, at the time of *nirvāṇa*, there is a disruption in virtue of the quiescence of the continuity of being.

Verse 18

carame na niruddhe ca prathamo yujyate bhavaḥ/
carame nāniruddhe ca prathamo yujyate bhavaḥ//

It is not justifiable to assert that a being arises only at a time when a previous being ceases to be, nor also that a being arises when a previous being does not cease to be.

Verse 19

nirudhyamāne carame prathamo yadi jāyate/
nirudhyamāna ekaḥ syājjāyamāno 'paro bhavet//

If a being arises in the ceasing process of the previous being, then perhaps the ceasing process refers to one kind of being and the arising process to another.

Verse 20

na cennirudhyamānaśca jāyamānaśca yujyate/
sārdhaṃ ca mriyate yeṣu teṣu skandheṣu jāyate//

If it is not justifiable to assert that existence can be expressed in the concurrent process of arising and ceasing, then it should arise as well as cease within the same realm of the *skandhas* (i.e., the five aggregates of being).

Verse 21

evaṃ triṣvapi kāleṣu na yuktā bhavasaṃtatiḥ/
triṣu kāleṣu yā nāsti sā kathaṃ bhavasaṃtatiḥ//

Consequently, the continuity of being is not possible within the three temporal moments. As it does not exist within the three temporal moments, in what manner does it exist?

Note: Reference to past. present, and future.

CHAPTER XXII

Tathāgata parīkṣā

Examination of the Tathāgata

This chapter investigates the question of the *Tathāgata*. The term itself is an interesting one in that it refers to one who has attained or arrived at the state of truth (*tathatā* or *tattva*). It is normally translated as thus-come or thus-gone (*tathā-āgata* or *tathā-gata*).

In reality, this chapter is a logical consequence of what has been hinted at in the previous chapter. There we have seen that Nāgārjuna advertently or inadvertently stressed the concept of *bhāva* (rather than *bhava*), the realm of true worldly existence beyond any conceptualization. It is in this realm that the true meaning of a *Tathāgata* will have to be understood. He goes through the usual pattern of thought but, as in Chapter XVIII, Verse 8, he introduces the so-called four-cornered logic (*catuṣkoṭikā*), i.e., the four and only four possible ways of viewing anything. He applies the elements of this logic to the concepts of *śūnya* (void) and concludes that, afterall, *śūnya* is spokpn of only as a provisional means of understanding the true realm.

The two basic questions discussed here are (1) whether or not a *Tathāgata* lives after death and (2) whether or not a *Tathāgata* is concurrent with the five *skandhas*. These questions are reminiscent of the extreme distaste of metaphysical questions (i.e., "questions which tend not to edification") which the historial Buddha expressed when asked about certain speculative views on the eternal or non-eternal nature of the world, etc. (Confer *Majjhima-nikāya* I, 426–432, Discouse 63 Cuḷa-Maluṅkyasutta). The questions are, of course, ill-directed because they discriminate or bifurcate the concept of *Tathāgata*. In Verses 15 & 16 he finally asserts that there is a basic

identity between the realms of the *Tathāgata* and our mundane world. As a consequence, the world of truth, the *tattva*, the *tathatā*, and the *Tathāgata* are all one and the same, irrespective of the names we advertently or inadvertently employ.

Verse 1

skandhā na nānyaḥ skandhebhyo nāsmin skandhā na teṣu saḥ/
tathāgataḥ skandhavānna katamo 'tra tathāgataḥ//

The *Tathāgata* is not the (aggregation of the) *skandhas* nor is it different from the *skandhas*. He is not in the *skandhas* nor are the *skandhas* in him. As he cannot possess the *skandhas*, what actually is he?

Verse 2

buddhaḥ skandhānupādāya yadi nāsti svabhāvataḥ/
svabhāvataśca yo nāsti kutaḥ sa parabhāvataḥ//

If a Buddha appropriates the *skandhas*, it is not so from the standpoint of self-existence. As there can be no self-existence, how can there be (a Buddha from the standpoint of) other-existence?

Note: The Buddha and the Tathāgata are interchangeable concepts. They refer to the foremost enlightened state. Also, the term, *skandha*, is left untranslated in the hope of gaining currency.

Verse 3

pratītya parabhāvaṃ yaḥ so 'nātmetyupapadyate/
yaścānātmā sa ca kathaṃ bhaviṣyati tathāgataḥ//

It would thus follow that relationship by virtue of other-existence will constitute a non-self. But how could that which is a non-self be a *Tathāgata*?

Note: The use of the term *anātman* (non-self) here is not to be confused with the cardinal Buddhist doctrine by the same term.

Verse 4

yadi nāsti svabhāvaśca parabhāvaḥ kathaṃ bhavet/
svabhāvaparabhāvābhyāmṛte kaḥ sa tathāgataḥ//

If self-existence does not exist, how does other-existence exist? Apart from self-existence and other-existence, what could be (the nature of) a *Tathāgata*?

Verse 5

skandhānyadyanupādāya bhavetkaścittathāgataḥ/
sa idānīmupādadyādupādāya tato bhavet//

If a *Tathāgata* exists without appropriating the *skandhas*, then he should be appropriating the *skandhas* now. And he should be a *Tathāgata* in virtue of the appropriation.

Verse 6

skandhān cāpyanupādāya nāsti kaścittathāgataḥ/
yaśca nāstyanupādāya sa upādāsyate kathaṃ//

Again, no *Tathāgata* could exist without appropriating the *skandhas*. And how does an entity which cannot exist without appropriation appropriate the *skandhas*?

Verse 7

na bhavatyanupādattamupādānaṃ ca kiṃ cana/
na cāsti nirupādānaḥ kathaṃ cana tathāgataḥ//

There is neither an appropriating process nor an unappropriated entity. How could there ever be a *Tathāgata* which is without the process of appropriation?

Verse 8

tattvānyatvena yo nāsti mṛgyamānaśca pañcadhā/
upādānena sa kathaṃ prajñapyate tathāgataḥ//

How could a *Tathāgata* be known by his appropriating process when he does not exist in terms of the fivefold nature of identity and difference with respect to (the function of) the *skandhas*?

Verse 9

yadapidamupādānaṃ tatsvabhāvānna vidyate/
svabhāvataśca yannāsti kutastatparabhāvataḥ//

Again, the appropriating process cannot function from the standpoint of self-existence. If nothing exists in virtue of self-existence, how could it exist in virtue of other-existence?

Verse 10

evaṃ śūnyamupādānamupādātā ca sarvaśaḥ/
prajñapyate ca śūnyena kathaṃ śūnyastathāgataḥ//

Consequently, all instances of appropriation and the appropriating entity are in the nature of *śūnya*. But then, how could a *Tathāgata* in the nature of *śūnya* be known in terms of *śūnya*?

Note: It seems better to leave the technical term *śūnya* untranslated here as well as in the subsequent verses. The same can be said for its opposite, *aśūnya*.

Verse 11

śūnyamiti na vaktavyamaśūnyamiti vā bhavet/
ubhayaṃ nobhayaṃ ceti prajñaptyarthaṃ tu kathyate//

Nothing could be asserted to be *śūnya*, *aśūnya*, both *śūnya* and *aśūnya*, and neither *śūnya* nor *aśūnya*. They are asserted only for the purpose of provisional understanding.

Verse 12

śāśvatāśāśvatādyatra kutaḥ śānte catuṣṭayaṃ/
antānantādi cāpyatra kutaḥ śānte catuṣṭayaṃ//

How could the fourfold possible natures of permanence, impermanence, etc., manifest in quiescence? Again, how could the fourfold limit, limitless, etc., manifest in quiescence?

Note: Reference is again to the elements of the four-cornered logic (*catuṣkoṭikā*).

Verse 13

yena grāho gṛhītastu ghano 'stīti tathāgataḥ/
nāstīti sa vikalpayan nirvṛtasyāpi kalpayet//

One who is firmly entrenched in asserting (or grasping) the existence and non-existence of the *Tathāgata* will, in turn, even discriminate on the existence and non-existence of the *Tathāgata* in the *nirvāṇic* realm.

Verse 14

svabhāvataśca śūnye 'smimścintā naivopapadyate/
paraṃ nirodhādbhavati buddho na bhavatīti vā//

As the *Tathāgata* in its self-existence is in the nature of *śūnya*, it is not possible to reason that the Buddha exists or does not exist after liberation.

Verse 15

prapañcayanti ye buddhaṃ prapañcātītamavyayaṃ/
te prapañcahatāḥ sarve na paśyanti tathāgataṃ//

Those who resort wholly to provisional descriptions in speaking of the Buddha, which is actually beyond description and destruction, are impaired by the descriptions themselves and cannot understand the *Tathāgata*.

Note: This verse clearly indicates the non-identity of thought (discriminative knowledge) and reality.

Verse 16

tathāgato yatsvabhāvastatsvabhāvamidaṃ jagat/
tathāgato niḥsvabhāvo niḥsvabhāvamidaṃ jagat//

The *Tathāgata's* nature of self-existence is also the nature of this worldly existence. The *Tathāgata*, (strictly speaking), is without the nature of self-existence and this worldly existence is likewise so.

CHAPTER XXIII

Viparyāsa parīkṣā

Examination of the Perversion of Truth

This chapter discusses the interesting question of perversion or false perception (*viparyāsa, viparyaya*) of truth or reality. The term itself is a central concept in Buddhism for in and through it all our false views are said to evolve. And in this sense it belongs to the conceptual or ideational process in man. Nāgārjuna attempts to show at the outset that the origin of all false views lies in the adulteration and complication of what is pure and what is impure. All perversions, in this sense, mean confusing the pure with the impure. With purity of experience in the background, he then goes through the usual process of arguing that elements or matters attached or related to the process of perversion do not exist in the real sense. He finally brings out the concept of perversion for direct examination and shows that the concepts of perceiver, the perceived, that which depends on perception, and perception itself are all false constructions. On the other hand, from the basic standpoint of truth or reality, they are all of the nature of quiescence. What is then to be done? He concludes that the perversion itself must cease in order to destroy ignorance and that by the destruction of ignorance all devious functions of the five *skandhas*, such as, *saṃskāra* and *vijñāna*, will be extinguished, thus arriving at ultimate quiescence or *nirvāṇa*.

Incidentally, the Chinese as well as the Tibetan versions are lacking in Verse 20.

Verse 1

saṃkalpaprabhavo rāgo dveṣo mohaśca kathyate/
śubhāśubhaviparyāsān saṃbhavanti pratītya hi//

Covetousness, enmity, and delusion are said to arise from false ideation or conceptualization. Indeed, they come about in virtue of the perverse relational play of purity and impurity.

Verse 2

śubhāśubhaviparyāsān saṃbhavanti pratītya ye/
te svabhāvanna vidyante tasmātkleśā na tattvataḥ//

That which comes about in virtue of the perverse relational play of purity and impurity cannot possibly have self-existence or self-nature. Therefore, defilements are not in the nature of thatness or truth.

Note: Defilements (*kléśā*) take on two aspects, i.e., physical and mental, and the verse makes reference to them in the inclusive sense.

Verse 3

ātmano 'stitvanāstitve na kathaṃ cicca sidhyataḥ/
taṃ vināstitvanāstitve kleśānāṃ sidhyataḥ kathaṃ//

The existence and non-existence of *ātman* can never be established. How then could the existence and non-existence of defilements be established apart from the *ātman*?

Verse 4

kasya ciddhi bhavantīme kleśāḥ sa ca na sidhyati/
kaścidāho vinā kaṃ citsanti kleśā na kasya cit//

These defilements are said to exist with someone but such a person cannot be established. That is to say, separated from a person these defilements seem to exist independently without belonging to anyone.

Verse 5

svakāyadṛṣṭivatkleśāḥ kliṣṭe santi na pañcadhā/
svakāyadṛṣṭivatkliṣṭaṃ kleśeṣvapi na pañcadhā//

As in falsely viewing one's own body, the defilements do not exist in a fivefold manner with respect to the defiled person. As in falsely viewing one's own body, conversely, the defiled person does not exist in a fivefold manner with respect to the defilements.

Note: Reference is made to the five *skandhas* with their respective defilements.

Verse 6

svabhāvato na vidyante śubhāśubhaviparyayāḥ/
pratītya katamān kleśāḥ śubhāśubhaviparyayān//

The perversions of purity and impurity cannot exist from the standpoint of self-existence. In virtue of what type of perverse relational plays of purity and impurity do defilements exist?

Verse 7

rūpaśabdarasasparśā gandhā dharmāśca ṣaḍvidhaṃ/
vastu rāgasya dveṣasya mohasya ca vikalpyate//

Material form, voice, taste, touch, smell, and the various factors of existence are conceptualized as the sixfold objects of covetousness, enmity, and delusion.

Verse 8

rūpaśabdarasasparśā gandhā dharmāśca kevalāḥ/
gandharvanagarākārā marīcisvapnasaṃnibhāḥ//

Material form, voice, taste, touch, smell, and the various factors of existence are all merely like an imaginary city in the sky, a mirage, or a dream.

Verse 9

aśubhaṃ vā śubhaṃ vāpi kutasteṣu bhaviṣyati/
māyāpuruṣakalpeṣu pratibimbasameṣu ca//

How could there be assertions of purity and impurity when, like the conceptions of a deluded mind, they are similar to shadowy representations?

Verse 10

anapekṣya śubhaṃ nāstyaśubhaṃ prajñapayemahi/
yatpratītya śubhaṃ tasmācchubhaṃ naivopapadyate//

We provisionally assert that impurity cannot exist without being mutually dependent on purity and that, in turn, purity exists only as related to impurity. Therefore, purity per se is not possible.

Verse 11

anapekṣyāśubhaṃ nāsti śubhaṃ prajñapayemahi/
yatpratītyāśubhaṃ tasmādaśubhaṃ naiva vidyate//

We provisionally assert that purity cannot exist without being mutually dependent on impurity and that, in turn, impurity exists only as related to purity. Therefore, impurity per se does not exist.

Verse 12

avidyamāne ca śubhe kuto rāgo bhaviṣyati/
aśubhe 'vidyamāne ca kuto dveṣo bhaviṣyati//

When there is no purity per se, how could covetousness arise? Also, when there is no impurity per se, how could enmity arise?

Verse 13

anitye nityamityevaṃ yadi grāho viparyayaḥ/
nānityaṃ vidyate śūnye kuto grāho viparyayaḥ//

If perception is a perversion such that permanence is in impermanence, then it is not possible for impermance to be in *śūnya*. How then could that perception be a perversion?

Note: *grāha* is translated as perception in the sense of a static grasp of an object in an otherwise dynamic function. This is the basis of all ills or *duḥkha*.

Verse 14

anitye nityamityevaṃ yadi grāho viparyayaḥ/
anityamityapi grāhaḥ śūnye kiṃ na viparyayaḥ//

If perception is a perversion such that permanence is in impermanence, then again, how is it that the perception of impermanence with respect to *śūnya* is not a perversion?

Verse 15

yena gṛhṇāti yo grāho grahītā yacca gṛhyate/
upaśāntāni sarvāṇi tasmādgrāho na vidyate//

That which depends on perceiving, the perception, the perceiver, and that which is perceived are all of the nature of quiescence. Therefore, perception in itself does not exist.

Verse 16

avidyamāne grāhe ca mithyā vā samyageva vā/
bhavedviparyayaḥ kasya bhavetkasyāviparyayaḥ//

As there is no perception, properly or improperly, who does and who does not have the perversion?

'erse 17

na cāpi viparītasya saṃbhavanti viparyayāh/
na cāpyaviparītasya saṃbhavanti viparyayāḥ//

Perversions do not come about even in one who perverses. Again, they do not come about even in one who does not perverse.

Verse 18

na viparyasyamānasya saṃbhavanti viparyayāḥ/
vimṛśasva svayaṃ kasya saṃbhavanti viparyayāḥ//

Perversions do not come about even in one who is presently perversing. Consider seriously by yourself.... in whom will the perversions arise?

Verse 19

anutpannāḥ kathaṃ nāma bhaviṣyanti viparyayāḥ/
viparyayeṣvajāteṣu viparyayagataḥ kutaḥ//

How could there be non-originated perversions? When perversions have not occurred, how could there possibly be one who perverses?

Verse 20

na svato jāyate bhāvaḥ parato naiva jāyate/
na svataḥ parataśceti viparyayagataḥ kutaḥ//

Existence does not come about by itself or by an other. Nor does it come about by both self and other. How could there possibly be one who perverses?

Verse 21

ātmā ca śuci nityaṃ ca sukhaṃ ca yadi vidyate/
ātmā ca śuci nityaṃ ca sukhaṃ ca na viparyayaḥ//

If *ātman*, purity, permanence, and bliss are to be admitted (i.e., exist), then they are not to be considered as perversions.

Verse 22

nātmā ca śuci nityaṃ ca sukhaṃ ca yadi vidyate/
anātmā 'śucyanityaṃ ca naiva duḥkhaṃ ca vidyate//

If *ātman*, purity, permanence, and bliss are not to be admitted (i.e., non-existent), then likewise *anātman*, impurity, impermanence, and suffering are not to be admitted.

Verse 23

evaṃ nirudhyate 'vidyā viparyayanirodhanāt/
avidyāyāṃ niruddhāyāṃ saṃskārādyaṃ nirudhyate//

Consequently, ignorance is destroyed by the cessation of perversion. And by the destruction of ignorance, mental conformations, etc., are also destroyed.

Verse 24

yadi bhūtāḥ svabhāvena kleśāḥ ke ciddhi kasya cit/
kathaṃ nāma prahīyeran kaḥ svabhāvaṃ prahāsyati//

If the defilements really exist in someone in virtue of self-nature, how could they be abandoned and who could abandon the self-nature?

Verse 25

yadyabhūtāḥ svabhāvena kleśāḥ ke ciddhi kasya cit/
kathaṃ nāma prahīyeran ko 'sadbhāvaṃ prahāsyati//

If the defilements do not really exist in someone in virtue of self-nature, how could they be abandoned and who is able to abandon non-realities?

CHAPTER XXIV

Āryasatya parīkṣā

Examination of the Four-fold Noble Truth

In this chapter we are treated to glimpses of a real genius at work. The chapter together with Chapters I & XXV explore the crucial ideas of *śūnyatā*, *pratītyasamutpāda*, and *madhyamā pratipad*

The chapter begins by first listening to the opponent's view (verses 1–6) that if everything is *śūnya* or *śūnyatā* (voidness) then all that is of the mundane world will be destroyed. Nāgārjuna quickly reminds him that he does not know the real import of *śūnyatā* or its meaning. The various *Buddhas* have, afterall, taught us about the *dharma* (Buddhist truth) by way of the twofold truths, i.e., *samvṛti-satya* (relative or worldly truth) and *paramārtha-satya* (absolute or supreme truth). The subtle distinction between the two truths must be clearly understood and, moreover, the absolute truth cannot be arrived at without first going through or experiencing the mundane, relative truths in everyday living. *Śūnyatā* is, afterall, the basis of all *dharmas* (factors of experience) or of all truths. In the famous Verse 18, Nāgārjuna equates *śūnyatā* with *pratītyasamutpāda*. It is also the *madhyamā pratipad* (the middle path) and only a provisional name for the expression of truth itself. Incidentally, this verse will become the basis for the philosophical development of the Chinese *T'ien-t'ai* School (*T'ien-t'ai san-ti-chi, kung-chia-chung* 天台三諦偈, 空・假・中). Moreover, Nāgārjuna argues that *śūnyatā* is not to be equated with *aśūnya* ("non-void"), for in *aśūnya* the same view held by the opponent, i.e., that everything in the mundane world will be non-existent or destroyed, will then become valid.

In exhibiting the real purpose of the chapter, i.e., the examination of the Aryan fourfold truths, he is highly critical of the opponent's

adherence to the notion of a self-sustaining, self-abiding entity. Since *śūnyatā* is not amenable to any abiding or enduring treatment it therefore is the basis of all beings. Thus the Aryan truths of suffering, its extinction, the way, and final *nirvāṇa* become intelligible only by and in *śūnyatā*. Indeed, *śūnyatā* is a central concept in Nāgārjuna.

Verse 1 (The opponent contends)

yadi śūnyamidaṃ sarvamudayo nāsti na vyayaḥ/
catūrṇāmāryasatyānāmabhāvaste prasajyate//

If everything is *śūnya* there will be neither production nor destruction. According to your assertion it will follow that the Āryan Fourfold Truths are non-existent.

Note: Verses 1 through 6 are views expressed by the opponent. Again, *śūnya* is left untranslated in order to gain currency in Western usage and understanding.

Verse 2

parijña ca prahāṇaṃ ca bhāvanā sākṣikarma ca/
catūrṇāmāryasatyānāmabhāvānnopapadyate//

True knowledge, relinquishing (false views), (right) practice, and (right) confirmation will not be possible because of the non-existence of the Āryan Four-fold Truths.

Verse 3

tadabhāvānna vidyante catvāryāryaphalāni ca/
phalābhāve phalasthā no na santi pratipannakāḥ//

As these are non-existent, the Āryan four-fold fruits i.e., spiritual attainments, are also non-existent. As the fruits are non-existent, there will be no one who enjoys the fruits or their fruition.

Note: This verse makes reference to the four paths and fruits of attainment by the one who takes up the Buddhist principles (*śrotāpanna*), once returner to the empirical level (*sakṛdāgamin*), the non-returner (*anāgamin*), and the enlightened worthy one (*arhat*).

Verse 4

saṃgho nāsti na cetsanti te 'ṣṭau puruṣapudgalāḥ/
abhāvāccāryasatyānāṃ saddharmo 'pi na vidyate//

If the eight aspirations of men do not exist, there will be no *Saṃgha* (i.e., Buddhist order). From the non-existence of the Āryan Truths, the true *Dharma* also does not exist.

Note: The eight refer to the four matured states (*phalasthā*) and the four arrived states (*pratipannakāḥ*) mentioned in the previous verse.

Verse 5

dharme cāsati saṃghe ca kathaṃ buddho bhaviṣyati/
evaṃ triṇyapi ratnāni bruvāṇāḥ pratibādhase//

Without *Dharma* and *Saṃgha*, how could there be *Buddha*? Consequently, what you assert also destroys the Three Treasures.

Note: The implication here is that since all is *śūnya*, there are no grounds for asserting the Three Treasures, i.e., the *Buddha*, the *Dharma*, and the *Saṃgha*.

Verse 6

śūnyatāṃ phalasadbhāvamadharmaṃ dharmameva ca/
sarvasaṃvyavahārāṃśca laukikān pratibādhase//

Delving in *śūnyatā*, you will destroy the reality of the fruit or attainment, the proper and improper acts, and all the everyday practices relative to the empirical world.

Verse 7 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

atra brūmaḥ śūnyatāyāṃ na tvaṃ vetsi prayojanaṃ/
śūnyatāṃ śūnyatārthaṃ ca tata evaṃ vihanyase//

Let us interrupt here to point out that you do not know the real purpose of *śūnyatā*, its nature and meaning. Therefore, there is only frustration and hindrance (of understanding).

Verse 8

dve satye samupāśritya buddhānāṃ dharmadeśanā/
lokasaṃvṛtisatyaṃ ca satyaṃ ca paramārthataḥ//

The teaching of the *Dharma* by the various *Buddhas* is based on the two truths; namely, the relative (worldly) truth and the absolute (supreme) truth.

Verse 9

ye 'nayorna vijānanti vibhāgaṃ satyayordvayoḥ/
te tattvaṃ na vijānanti gambhīraṃ buddhaśāsane//

Those who do not know the distinction between the two truths cannot understand the profound nature of the Buddha's teaching.

Verse 10

vyavahāramanāśritya paramārtho na deśyate/
paramārthamanāgamya nirvāṇaṃ nādhigamyate//

Without relying on everyday common practices (i.e., relative truths), the absolute truth cannot be expressed. Without approaching the absolute truth, *nirvāṇa* cannot be attained.

Verse 11

vināśayati durdṛṣṭā śūnyatā mandamedhasaṃ/
sarpo yathā durgṛhīto vidyā vā duṣprasādhitā//

A wrongly conceived *śūnyatā* can ruin a slow-witted person. It is like a badly seized snake or a wrongly executed incantation.

Verse 12

ataśca pratyudāvṛttaṃ cittaṃ deśayituṃ muneḥ/
dharmaṃ matvāsya dharmasya mandairduravagāhatāṃ//

Thus the wise one (i.e., the Buddha) once resolved not to teach about the *Dharma*, thinking that the slow-witted might wrongly conceive it.

Verse 13

śūnyatāyāmadhilayaṃ yaṃ punaḥ kurute bhavān/
doṣaprasaṅgo nāsmākaṃ sa śūnye nopapadyate//

You have repeatedly refuted *śūnyatā* but we do not fall into any error. The refutation does not apply to *śūnya.*

Verse 14

sarvaṃ ca yujyate tasya śūnyatā yasya yujyate/
sarvaṃ na yujyate tasya śūnyaṃ yasya na yujyate//

Whatever is in correspondence with *śūnyatā*, all is in correspondence (i.e., possible). Again, whatever is not in correspondence with *śūnyatā*, all is not in correspondence.

Note: The meaning conveyed here is that *śūnyatā* is the basis of all existence. Thus, without it, nothing is possible.

Verse 15

sa tvaṃ doṣānātmanīyānasmāsu paripātayan/
aśvamevābhirūḍhaḥ sannaśvamevāsi vismṛtaḥ//

You level your own errors at us. It is as if you are mounted on your horse but forget about it.

Verse 16

svabhāvādyadi bhāvānāṃ sadbhāvamanupaśyasi/
ahetupratyayān bhāvāṃstvamevaṃ sati paśyasi//

If you perceive the various existences as true beings from the standpoint of self-nature, then you will perceive them as non-causal conditions.

Verse 17

kāryaṃ ca kāraṇam caiva kartāraṃ karaṇam kriyāṃ/
utpādaṃ ca nirodhaṃ ca phalaṃ ca pratibādhase//

You will then destroy (all notions of) cause, effect, doer, means of doing, doing, origination, extinction, and fruit (of action).

Verse 18

yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatāṃ tāṃ pracakṣmahe/
sā prajñaptirupādāya pratipatsaiva madhyamā//

We declare that whatever is relational origination is *śūnyatā*. It is a provisional name (i.e., thought construction) for the mutuality (of being) and, indeed, it is the middle path.

Verse 19

apratītya samutpanno dharmaḥ kaścinna vidyate/
yasmāttasmādaśūnyo hi dharmaḥ kaścinna vidyate//

Any factor of experience which does not participate in relational origination cannot exist. Therefore, any factor of experience not in the nature of *śūnya* cannot exist.

Verse 20

yadyaśūnyamidaṃ sarvamudayo nāsti na vyayaḥ/
catūrṇāmāryasatyānāmabhāvaste prasajyate//

If everything were of the nature of non-*śūnya*, then there would be neither production nor destruction. Then also the non-existence of the Aryan Fourfold Truths would accordingly follow.

Verse 21

apratītya samutpannaṃ kuto duḥkhaṃ bhaviṣyati/
anityamuktaṃ duḥkhaṃ hi tatsvābhāvye na vidyate//

Where could suffering in the nature of non-relational origination arise? For, indeed, what is impermanent is said to be in the nature of suffering and the impermanent cannot exist in something with self-nature.

Verse 22

svabhāvato vidyamānaṃ kiṃ punaḥ samudeṣyate/
tasmātsamudayo nāsti śūnyatāṃ pratibādhataḥ//

How could that which has self-nature arise again? Therefore, there is no arising in that which disaffirms (i.e., destroys) *śūnyatā*.

Verse 23

na nirodhaḥ svabhāvena sato duḥkhasya vidyate/
svabhāvaparyavasthānānnirodhaṃ pratibādhase//

The extinction of suffering in terms of self-nature does not happen. For, you deny extinction itself by adhering to the notion of self-nature.

Verse 24

svābhāvye sati mārgasya bhāvanā nopapadyate/
athāsau bhāvyate mārgaḥ svābhāvyaṃ te na vidyate//

If the way to enlightenment possesses self-nature, then its practice will not be possible. But if the way is practiced, your assertion of a way involving self-nature is inadmissible (i.e., cannot exist).

Verse 25

yadā duḥkhaṃ samudayo nirodhaśca na vidyate/
mārgo duḥkhanirodhatvātkatamaḥ prāpayiṣyati//

When suffering, arising, and extinction cannot be admitted to exist, what path is achieved in virtue of the extinction of suffering?

Verse 26

svabhāvenāparijñānaṃ yadi tasya punaḥ kathaṃ/
parijñānaṃ nanu kila svabhāvaḥ samavasthitaḥ//

If (suffering) cannot be known in virtue of self-nature, how does it become an object of knowledge again? Self-nature, indeed, never remains fixed.

Verse 27

prahāṇasākṣātkaraṇe bhāvanā caivameva te/
parijñāvanna yujyante catvāryapi phalāni ca//

Just as in the case of knowledge (of suffering), therefore, your knowledge of abandoning, perceptual confirmation, practice, and the four fruits (i.e., religious attainments) cannot be possible.

Verse 28

svabhāvenānadhigataṃ yatphalaṃ tatpunaḥ kathaṃ/
śakyaṃ samadhigantuṃ syātsvabhāvaṃ parigṛhṇataḥ//

To one who adheres to the notion of self-existence, how could the (four) fruits which are unattainable in virtue of self-existence be ever attainable?

Verse 29

phalābhāve phalasthā no na santi pratipannakāḥ/
saṃgho nāsti na cetsanti te 'ṣṭau puruṣapudgalāḥ//

Without the (four) fruits, there can be no matured states and arrived (i.e., completed) states. If these eight states of men do not exist, there will also be no realization of the *Saṃgha*.

Note: Refer to verses 3 and 4 for the fruits and states of men.

Verse 30

abhāvāccāryasatyānāṃ saddharmo 'pi na vidyate/
dharme cāsati saṃghe ca kathaṃ buddho bhaviṣyati//

Without the Aryan Truths the true *Dharma* does not exist. Without the *Dharma* and *Saṃgha*, how could there be the *Buddha*?

Verse 31

apratītyāpi bodhiṃ ca tava buddhaḥ prasajyate/
apratītyāpi buddhaṃ ca tava bodhiḥ prasajyate//

According to your assertion there is a fallacy of becoming the *Buddha* without relationship to enlightenment. Also, conversely, there is enlightenment without relationship to the *Buddha.*

Verse 32

yaścābuddhaḥ svabhāvena sa bodhāya ghaṭannapi/
na bodhisattvacaryāyāṃ bodhiṃ te 'dhigamiṣyati//

According to your assertion, anyone who is not a *Buddha* in virtue of self-existence cannot hope to attain enlightenment even by serious endeavor or by practice of the *Bodhisattva* way.

Verse 33

na ca dharmamadharmaṃ vā kaścijjātu kariṣyati/
kimaśūnyasya kartavyaṃ svabhāvaḥ kriyate na hi//

No one would ever be able to create factors or non-factors of experience. For, what is there to create in non-*śūnya*? Self-existence, afterall, cannot be created.

Note: The word, create, may well be substituted by manipulate.

Verse 34

vinā dharmamadharma ca phalaṃ hi tava vidyate/
dharmādharmanimittaṃ ca phalaṃ tava na vidyate//

According to your assertion, the fruit could exist separated from factors and non-factors of experience. Again, according to your assertion, the fruit could not have arisen by the factors and non-factors of experience.

Verse 35

dharmādharmanimittaṃ vā yadi te vidyate phalaṃ/
dharmādharmasamutpannamaśūnyaṃ te kathaṃ phalaṃ//

If you are to admit the fruit based on the factors and non-factors of experience, how could the fruit arising from them be of the nature of non-*śūnya*?

Verse 36

sarvasaṃvyavahārāṃśca laukikān pratibādhase/
yatpratītyasamutpādaśūnyatāṃ pratibādhase//

You will thus destroy all the everyday practices relative to the empirical world because you will have destroyed the *śūnyatā* of relational origination.

Verse 37

na kartavyaṃ bhavetkiṃ cidanārabdhā bhavetkriyā/
kārakaḥ syādakurvāṇaḥ śūnyatāṃ pratibādhataḥ//

For one who destroys *śūnyatā*, it will be like a doer without an action, a non-activating action, or with nothing to act upon.

Verse 38

ajātamaniruddhaṃ ca kūṭasthaṃ ca bhaviṣyati/
vicitrābhiravasthābhiḥ svabhāve rahitaṃ jagat//

From the standpoint of self-existence, the world will be removed from the various conditions and it will be non-originative, non-destructive, and immovable.

Verse 39

asaṃprāptasya ca prāptirduḥkhaparyantakarma ca/
sarvakleśaprahāṇaṃ ca yadyaśūnyaṃ na vidyate//

If everything is non-*śūnya*, then the attainment of a person who aspires, the actions leading to the cessation of suffering, and the destruction of all defilements will not exist (i.e., be possible).

Verse 40

yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaṃ paśyatīdaṃ sa paśyati/
duḥkhaṃ samudayaṃ caiva nirodhaṃ mārgameva ca//

One who rightly discerns relational origination will, indeed, rightly discern universal suffering, its origination, its extinction, and the way to enlightenment.

CHAPTER XXV

Nirvāṇa parīkṣā

Examination of Nirvāṇa

This is naturally the most famous as well as the most popular chapter of the entire *Kārikā*. Even the renown Stcherbatsky felt that an English translation of this chapter from the *Prasannapadā* was duly necessary. Incidentally, his translation of both Chapters I & XXV out of the entire 27 chapters reveals how well he knew these chapters to be the crux of the Mādhyamika philosophy and, perhaps, suggests the reason why he labelled his pioneering book *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*.

This chapter then discusses the central concept of *nirvāṇa* which has attracted so much attention from all quarters of the world. Nāgārjuna, first of all, presents the opponent's view on the problem of *nirvāṇa*, i.e., if everything is granted as either *śūnya* or *aśūnya*. Stcherbatsky, incidentally, employs the English word, "relative", for *śūnya* but despite his expressed proclivity for scientific correlation and understanding the translation is inaccurate and even misleading. At any rate, Nāgārjuna is quick to assert that *nirvāṇa* is not the idea of existence known by worldly characterization. It admits of nothing to be cast off, gained, broken off or remaining constant, extinguished or produced, for it, in reality, belongs to the uncreated realm (*asaṃskṛta*). In Verses 17 & 18, the patent questions on Buddha's existence, before and after *nirodha*, are discussed but these are disposed of immediately in view of their conceptual untenability. Then in Verses 19 & 20, the essence of the chapter and indeed the crux of the Mahāyāna or Buddhism in general is stated, i.e., that there is no distinction between *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*, and also no difference in their spheres of action. With this identity

Nāgārjuna, in a broad sweep, destroys any adherence to false polar or contrasting distinctions, such as, natural and supernatural, mundane and supermundane, and normal and supernormal.

Verse 1 (The opponent contends)

yadi śūnyamidaṃ sarvamudayo nāsti na vyayaḥ/
prahāṇādvā nirodhādvā kasya nirvāṇamiṣyate//

If all is *śūnya* and there is neither production nor destruction, then from whose abandonment (of defilements) or from whose extinction (of suffering) can *nirvāṇa* be attributed?

Note: Once again, *śūnya* is left untranslated.

Verse 2 (Nāgārjuna asserts)

yadyaśūnyamidaṃ sarvamudayo nāsti na vyayaḥ/
prahāṇādvā nirodhādvā kasya nirvāṇamiṣyate//

If all is *aśūnya* and there is neither production nor destruction, then from whose abandonment (of defilements) or from whose extinction (of suffering) can *nirvāṇa* be attributed?

Note: Nāgārjuna, in the previous chapter, has stated that the critic of *śūnya* does not really know its meaning and thus cannot understand *śūnya* with respect to ordinary activities. Nāgārjuna reveals the fallacy of understanding *śūnya* in terms of self-existence (*svabhāva*) and, analogously, demonstrates the absurdity of premising even the concept of *aśūnya*. as it is done in this verse.

Verse 3

aprahīṇamasaṃprāptamanucchinnamaśāśvataṃ/
aniruddhamanutpannametannirvāṇamucyate//

What is never cast off, seized, interrupted, constant, extinguished, and produced....this is called *nirvāṇa*.

Verse 4

bhāvastāvanna nirvāṇaṃ jarāmaraṇalakṣaṇaṃ/
prasajyetāsti bhāvo hi na jarāmaraṇaṃ vinā//

Indeed, *nirvāṇa* is not strictly in the nature of ordinary existence for, if it were, there would wrongly follow the characteristics of old age-death. For, such an existence cannot be without those characteristics.

Verse 5

bhāvaśca yadi nirvāṇaṃ nirvāṇaṃ saṃskṛtaṃ bhavet/
nāsaṃkṛto hi vidyate bhāvaḥ kva cana kaścana//

If *nirvāṇa* is strictly in the nature of ordinary existence, it will be of the created realm. For, no ordinary existence of the uncreated realm ever exists anywhere at all.

Verse 6

bhāvaśca yadi nirvāṇamanupādāya tatkathaṃ/
nirvāṇaṃ nānupādāya kaścidbhāvo hi vidyate//

If *nirvāṇa* is strictly in the nature of ordinary existence, why is it non-appropriating? For, no ordinary existence that is non-appropriating ever exists.

Verse 7

yadi bhāvo na nirvāṇamabhāvaḥ kiṃ bhaviṣyati/
nirvāṇaṃ yatra bhāvo na nābhāvastatra vidyate//

If *nirvāṇa* is not strictly in the nature of ordinary existence, how could what is in the nature of non-existence be *nirvāṇa*? Where there is no existence, equally so, there can be no non-existence.

Verse 8

yadyabhāvaśca nirvāṇamanupādāya tatkathaṃ/
nirvāṇaṃ na hyabhāvo 'sti yo 'nupādāya vidyate//

If *nirvāṇa* is in the nature of non-existence, why is it non-appropriating? For, indeed, a non-appropriating non-existence does not prevail.

Verse 9

ya ājavaṃjavībhāva upādāya pratītya vā/
so 'pratītyānupādāya nirvāṇamupadiśyate//

The status of the birth-death cycle is due to existential grasping (of the *skandhas*) and relational condition (of the being). That which is non-grasping and non-relational is taught as *nirvāṇa*.

Verse 10

prahāṇaṃ cābravīcchāstā bhavasya vibhavasya ca/
tasmānna bhāvo nābhāvo nirvāṇamiti yujyate//

The teacher (Buddha) has taught the abandonment of the concepts of being and non-being. Therefore, *nirvāṇa* is properly neither (in the realm of) existence nor non-existence.

Verse 11

bhavedabhāvo bhāvaśca nirvāṇamubhayaṃ yadi/
bhavedabhāvo bhāvaśca mokṣastacca na yujyate//

If *nirvaṇa* is (in the realm of) both existence and non-existence, then *mokṣa* (liberation) will also be both. But that is not proper.

Verse 12

bhavedabhāvo bhāvaśca nirvāṇamubhayaṃ yadi/
nānupādāya nirvāṇamupādāyobhayaṃ hi tat//

If *nirvāṇa* is (in the realm of) both existence and non-existence, it will not be non-appropriating. For, both realms are (always in the process of) appropriating.

Verse 13

bhavedabhāvo bhāvaśca nirvāṇamubhayaṃ kathaṃ/
asaṃskṛtaṃ ca nirvāṇaṃ bhāvābhāvau ca saṃskṛtau//

How could *nirvāṇa* be (in the realm of) both existence and non-existence? *Nirvāṇa* is of the uncreated realm while existence and non-existence are of the created realm.

Verse 14

bhavedabhāvo bhāvaśca nirvāṇa ubhayaṃ kathaṃ/
na tayorekatrāstitvamālokatamasoryathā//

How could *nirvāṇa* be (in the realm of) both existence and non-existence? Both cannot be together in one place just as the situation is with light and darkness.

Verse 15

naivābhāvo naiva bhāvo nirvāṇamiti yā 'ñjanā/
abhāve caiva bhāve ca sā siddhe sati sidhyati//

The proposition that *nirvāṇa* is neither existence nor non-existence could only be valid if and when the realms of existence and non-existence are established.

Verse 16

naivābhāvo naiva bhāvo nirvāṇaṃ yadi vidyate/
naivābhāvo naiva bhāva iti kena tadajyate//

If indeed *nirvāṇa* is asserted to be neither existence nor non-existence, then by what means are the assertion to be known?

Verse 17

paraṃ nirodhādbhagavān bhavatītyeva nohyate/
na bhavatyubhayaṃ ceti nobhayaṃ ceti nohyate//

It cannot be said that the Blessed One exists after *nirodha* (i.e., release from worldly desires). Nor can it be said that He does not exist after *nirodha*, or both, or neither.

Verse 18

tiṣṭhamāno 'pi bhagavān bhavatītyeva nohyate/
na bhavatyubhayaṃ ceti nobhayaṃ ceti nohyate//

It cannot be said that the Blessed One even exists in the present living process. Nor can it be said that He does not exist in the present living process, or both, or neither.

Verse 19

na saṃsārasya nirvāṇātkiṃ cidasti viśeṣaṇaṃ/
na nirvāṇasya saṃsārātkiṃ cidasti viśeṣaṇaṃ//

Saṃsāra (i.e., the empirical life-death cycle) is nothing essentially different from *nirvāṇa*. *Nirvāṇa* is nothing essentially different from *saṃsāra*.

Verse 20

nirvāṇasya ca yā koṭiḥ saṃsārasya ca/
na tayorantaraṃ kiṃ citsusūkṣmamapi vidyate//

The limits (i.e., realm) of *nirvāṇa* are the limits of *saṃsāra*. Between the two, also, there is not the slightest difference whatsoever.

Verse 21

paraṃ nirodhādantādyāh śāśvatādyāśca dṛṣṭayaḥ/
nirvāṇamaparāntaṃ ca pūrvāntaṃ ca samāśritāḥ//

The various views concerning the status of life after *nirodha*, the limits of the world, the concept of permanence, etc., are all based on (the concepts of) *nirvāṇa*, posterior and anterior states (of existence).

Verse 22

śūnyeṣu sarvadharmeṣu kimanantaṃ kimantavat/
kimanantamantavacca nānantaṃ nānatavacca kiṃ//

Since all factors of existence are in the nature of *śūnya*, why (assert) the finite, the infinite, both finite and infinite, and neither finite nor infinite?

Verse 23

kiṃ tadeva kimanyatkiṃ śāśvataṃ kimaśāśvataṃ/
aśāśvataṃ śāśvataṃ ca kiṃ vā nobhayamapyataḥ//

Why (assert) the identity, difference, permanence, impermanence, both permanence and impermanence, or neither permanence nor impermanence?

Verse 24

sarvopalambhopaśamaḥ prapañcopaśamaḥ śivaḥ/
na kva citkasya citkaściddharmo buddhena deśitaḥ//

All acquisitions (i.e., grasping) as well as play of concepts (i.e., symbolic representation) are basically in the nature of cessation and quiescence. Any factor of experience with regards to anyone at any place was never taught by the Buddha.

CHAPTER XXVI

Dvādaśāṇga parīkṣā

Examination of the Twelvefold Causal Analysis of Being

With the discussion of *Nirvāṇa* in the last chapter the treatment from the standpoint of the Mahāyāna had basically come to a close. In this chapter and the final one to follow, Nāgārjuna goes into the analysis of Hīnayānistic doctrines. The present chapter discusses the twelvefold causal analysis which is the basis of the endless process of suffering incurred by all living beings. The discussion is Hīnayānistic and it reveals that the source of trouble lies in ignorance which in turn initiates all kinds of mental conformations (*saṃskāra*). The extinction of ignorance, fundamental to the whole of Buddhism, is to be realized by the practice of wisdom of seeing the truth (*tattva*).

The discussion of the doctrine of causal analysis indicates the strong influence of Hīnayānistic or Abhidharmic teachings during this period. But the doctrine must be seen under a new light when Nāgārjuna discusses it, i.e., within the backdrop of his doctrine of *śūnyatā* and *pratītyāsamutpāda* as hinted at in the last two verses.

Verse 1

punarbhavāya saṃskārānavidyānivṛtastridhā/
abhisaṃskurute yāṃstairgatiṃ gacchati karmabhiḥ//

Those who are deluded by ignorance create their own threefold mental conformations in order to cause rebirth and by their deeds go through the various forms of life.

Note: The threefold mental conformations refer to those related to the body, speech and mind.

The various forms of life refer to the following: hellish beings, hungry spirits, beasts, evil spirits, human beings and heavenly beings.

Verse 2

vijñānaṃ saṃniviśate saṃskārapratyayaṃ gatau/
saṃniviṣṭe 'tha vijñāne nāmarūpaṃ niṣicyate//

The consciousness (*vijñāna*), conditioned by the mental conformations, establishes itself with respect to the various forms of life. When consciousness is established, name (*nāma*) and form (*rūpa*) are infused or become apparent.

Verse 3

niṣikte nāmarūpe tu ṣaḍāyatanasaṃbhavaḥ/
ṣaḍāyatanamāgamya saṃsparśaḥ saṃpravartate//

When name and form are infused or become apparent the six *āyatanas* (i.e., seats of perception) arise. With the rise of the six *āyatanas*, touch evolves.

Verse 4

cakṣuḥ pratītya rūpaṃ ca samanvāhārameva ca/
nāmarūpaṃ pratītyaivaṃ vijñānaṃ saṃpravartate//

As in the composite relational nature of the eye and its material form, consciousness arises in a similar relational nature of name and form.

Verse 5

saṃnipātastrayāṇāṃ yo rūpavijñānacakṣuṣām/
sparśaḥ saḥ tasmātsparśācca vedanā saṃpravartate//

The harmonious triadic nature of form, consciousness and eye issues forth touch. And from touch arises feeling.

Verse 6

vedanāpratyayā tṛṣṇā vedanārthaṃ hi tṛṣyate/
tṛṣyamāṇa upādānamupādatte caturvidhaṃ//

Relationally conditioned by feeling, craving arises because it "thirsts after" the object of feeling. In the process of craving, the fourfold clingings are seized.

Note: Reference to clingings of passions, dogmatic views, rigid rules of conduct, and selfhood (*kāma, dṛṣṭi, śila, ātman*).

Verse 7

upādāne sati bhava upādātuḥ pravartate/
syāddhi yadyanupādāno mucyeta na bhavedbhavaḥ//

When there is clinging perception, the perceiver generates being (*bhava*). When there is no clinging perception, he will be freed and there will be no being.

Verse 8

pañca skandhāḥ sa ca bhavaḥ bhavājjātiḥ pravartate/
jarāmaraṇaduḥkhādi śokāḥ saparidevanāḥ//

Being is (always in reference to) the five *skandhas* and from being birth arises. Old age-death, suffering, etc., misery, grief....(continues on to the next verse.)

Verse 9

daurmanasyamupāyāsā jāteretatpravartate/
kevalasyaivametasya duḥkhaskandhasya saṃbhavaḥ//

....despair and mental disturbance arise from birth. In this manner the simple suffering attached to the *skandhas* comes into being.

Verse 10

saṃsāramūlān saṃskārānavidvān saṃskarotyataḥ/
avidvān kārakastasmānna vidvāṃstattvadarśanāt//

Consequently, the ignorant creates the mental conformations which form the basis of *saṃsāric* life. Thus the ignorant is the doer while the wise, seeing the truth (*tattva*), does not create.

Verse 11

avidyāyāṃ niruddhāyāṃ saṃskārāṇāmasaṃbhavaḥ/
avidyāyā nirodhastu jñānenāsyaiva bhāvanāt//

When ignorance is banished mental conformations do not arise. But the extinction of ignorance is dependent upon the wisdom of practicing (the cessation of the twelvefold causal analysis of being).

Verse 12

tasya tasya nirodhena tattannābhipravartate/
duḥkhaskandhaḥ kevalo 'yamevaṃ samyagnirudhyate//

By the cessation of the various links of the causal analysis, each and every subsequent link will not arise (i.e., become a hindrance). And thus this simple suffering attached to the *skandhas* is rightfully extinguished.

CHAPTER XXVII

Dṛṣṭi parīkṣā

Examination of (Dogmatic) Views

This final chapter of the *Kārikā* again, as in the preceding chapter, treats Hīnayānistic doctrines prevalent at the time. As the title indicates, it is an examination of false or dogmatic views which the Hīnayāna levelled against non-Buddhists but once again we must not lose sight of the principal doctrine of *śūnyatā* that Nāgārjuna always has in the background. The doctrine of course does finally appear in Verse 29.

He begins the chapter by investigating such pet dogmatic or futile questions as whether or not there is existence in the past, and whether or not the realm of existence or the world is constant. These and other ideas relative to future events are all based on preconceived notions and never applicable to the present dynamic state of thing. Characteristic of the "logic of *śūnya*," as seen in previous chapters, he exhibits the untenability of each and every position. He also goes on to show the absurdity involved in trying to assign partial characterization to one realm and another partial characterization to yet another realm as, for example, speaking of partially limited and partially unlimited worlds. How then, he asks, could one portion of the perceiver be destroyed and another remain undestroyed? Thus we come to the final and foremost teaching of the historical Buddha, i.e., the true law (*saddharma*), which is beyond all views and valuation in the strictest sense. Indeed, as Nāgārjuna reminds us, all existences are of the nature of *śūnyatā* (devoid of characterization).

Verse 1

dṛṣṭayo 'bhūvaṃ nābhūvaṃ kiṃ nv atīte 'dhvanīti ca/
yāstāḥ śāśvatalokādyāḥ pūrvāntaṃ samupāśritāḥ//

Whether or not I existed in the past or whether this world is constant, etc., are (questions) all based upon the views of an anterior state of things.

Note: De La Vallée Poussin has reconstructed the missing first half of this verse from the Tibetan sources. cf. p. 571 of the *Prasannapadā.*

Verse 2

dṛṣṭayo na bhaviṣyāmi kimanyo 'nāgate 'dhvani/
bhaviṣyāmīti cāntādyā aparāntaṃ samāṣritāḥ//

Whether or not I will exist in the future or whether the (world has) limits, etc., are (questions) all based upon the views of a posterior state of things.

Verse 3

abhūmatītamadhvānamityetannopapadyate/
yo hi janmasu pūrveṣu sa eva na bhavatyayaṃ//

It is not possible to assert (categorically) that I existed in the past. For, what had been the case in the anterior state of existence is not the same now.

Verse 4

sa evātmeti tu bhavedupādānaṃ viśiṣyate/
upādānavinirmukta ātmā te katamaḥ punaḥ//

(Granted that) the self-same *ātman* exists (i.e., in the previous and present states) but with a different perceptual clinging (*upādāna*), what kind of an *ātman* is it, then, which is separated from clinging?

Verse 5

upādānavinirmukto nāstyātmeti kṛte sati/
syādupādānamevātmā nāsti cātmeti vaḥ punaḥ//

If *ātman* cannot exist separated from perceptual clinging, then the clinging itself will be the *ātman*. But, again, according to your assertion, there could be no *ātman*.

Verse 6

na copādānamevātmā vyeti tatsamudeti ca/
kathaṃ hi nāmopādānamupādātā bhaviṣyati//

Again, clinging *per se* is not *ātman* because it rises and vanishes. Indeed, how could perceptual clinging be identified with a perceiver?

Verse 7

anyaḥ punarupādānādātmā naivopapadyate/
gṛhyeta hyanupādāno yadyanyo na ca gṛhyate//

Again, an *ātman* different from perceptual clinging is not possible. If it were different then, surely, a non-perceptual clinging *ātman* would also be a possibility. But that is not the case.

Verse 8

evaṃ nānya upādānānna copādānameva saḥ/
ātmā nāstyanupādānaḥ nāpi nāstyeṣa niścayaḥ//

Consequently, *ātman* cannot be identical or different from perceptual clinging. It cannot be ascertained further that there is non-perceptual clinging or that the *ātman* does not exist.

Verse 9

nābhūmatītamadhvānamityetannopapadyate/
yo hi janmasu pūrveṣu tato 'nyo na bhavatyayam//

It is not possible to assert (categorically) that I did not exist in the past. For, this existence is no different from what had been the case in the anterior state of existence.

Verse 10

yadi hyayaṃ bhavedanyaḥ pratyākhyāyāpi taṃ bhavet/
tathaiva ca sa saṃtiṣṭhettatra jāyeta vāmṛtaḥ//

If this existence were different (from what had been the case in the anterior state) then, surely, it would exist independently or detached. It would subsist thus and so, or arise to persist eternally.

Verse 11

ucchedaḥ karmaṇāṃ nāśas tathānyena kṛtakarmaṇāṃ/
anyena paribhogaḥ syād evamādi prasajyate//

If that were the case then such erroneous notions as interruption, destruction of actions, actions done by someone but enjoyed by another, etc., would accordingly follow.

Note: This Sanskrit verse is missing but, deriving from Tibetan sources, added by De La Vallée Poussin. cf. p. 580 of the *Prasannapadā*.

Verse 12

nāpyabhūtvā samudbhūto doṣo hyatra prasajyate/
kṛtako vā bhavedātmā saṃbhūto vāpyahetukaḥ//

Again, it is not the case that present existence arose without an anterior existence for, otherwise, an error will result. This would mean that *ātman* will either have a creative nature or be something without a cause.

Verse 13

evaṃ dṛṣṭiratīte yā nābhūmahamabhūmahaṃ/
ubhayaṃ nobhayaṃ ceti naiṣā samupapadyate//

Consequently, the (false) views that I existed in the anterior state, I did not exist, both or neither, are all impossible.

Verse 14

adhvanyanāgate kiṃ nu bhaviṣyāmīti darśanaṃ/
na bhaviṣyāmi cetyetadatītenādhvanā samaṃ//

The view, whether or not I will exist in the posterior state, is the same (i.e., analogous) as that discussed with respect to the anterior state of existence.

Verse 15

sa devaḥ sa manuṣyaścedevaṃ bhavati śāśvataṃ/
anutpannaśca devaḥ syājjāyate na hi śāśvataṃ//

If the heavenly being is a human being, then there will be constancy. For, the heavenly being will be unborn and, moreover, a constant being will not arise.

Verse 16

devādanyo manuṣyaścedaśāśvatamato bhavet/
devādanyo manuṣyaścetsaṃtatirnopapadyate//

If a human being is different from the heavenly being, then there will be non-constancy. If that is so, there cannot possibly be a continuity (of beings).

Verse 17

divyo yadyekadeśaḥ syādekadeśaśca mānuṣaḥ/
aśāśvataṃ śāśvataṃ ca bhavettacca na yujyate//

If one portion is heavenly and another human, then there will be both constancy and non-constancy. But that is not possible.

Verse 18

aśāśvataṃ śāśvataṃ ca prasiddhamubhayaṃ yadi/
siddhe na śāśvataṃ kāmaṃ naivāśāśvatamityapi//

If both constancy and non-constancy could be established (concomitantly), then similarly neither constancy nor non-constancy could also be established at will.

Verse 19

kutaścidāgataḥ kaścitkiṃ cidgacchetpunaḥ kva cit/
yadi tasmādanādistu saṃsāraḥ syānna cāsti saḥ//

If anyone comes from somewhere and again goes (or returns) to somewhere else, then *saṃsāra* will indeed be beginningless. However, such a situation does not exist.

Verse 20

nāsti cecchāśvataḥ kaścitko bhaviṣyatyaśāśvataḥ/
śāśvato 'śāśvataścāpi dvābhyāmābhyāṃ tiraskṛtaḥ//

If there is nothing constant, (by the same token) how could there be anything non-constant, both constant and non-constant, and separated from both constant and non-constant?

Verse 21

antavān yadi lokaḥ syātparalokaḥ kathaṃ bhavet/
athāpyanantavāṃllokaḥ paralokaḥ kathaṃ bhavet//

If the world has limits, how could there be another world? On the other hand, if the world has no limits, how could there be another world?

Note: Loka is either the world or the realm of existence.

Verse 22

skandhānāmeṣa saṃtāno yasmāddīpārciṣāmiva/
pravartate tasmānnāntānantavattvaṃ ca yujyate//

The continuity of (the function of) the *skandhas* is like the continual burning of the flame and, therefore, it is not possible to speak of limits or non-limits.

Verse 23

pūrve yadi ca bhajyerannutpadyeranna cāpyamī/
skandhāḥ skandhān pratītyemānatha loko 'ntavān bhavet//

If a *skandha* is destroyed in the anterior state and the present *skandha* does not arise by being relationally conditioned by the former, then the realm (of function) will have limits.

Verse 24

pūrve yadi na bhajyerannutpadyeranna cāpyamī/
skandhāḥ skandhān pratītyemān loko 'nanto bhavedatha//

If a *skandha* is not destroyed in the anterior state and the present *skandha* does not arise by being relationally conditioned by the former, then the realm (of function) will not have any limits.

Verse 25

antavānekadeśaścedekadeśastvanantavān/
syādantavānanantaśca lokastacca na yujyate//

If one portion is limited and another non-limited, then perhaps the realm (of function) will be both limited and non-limited. But that is not possible.

Verse 26

kathaṃ tāvadupādāturekadeśo vinaṅkśyate/
na naṅkśyate caikadeśa evaṃ caitanna yujyate//

How, indeed, could one portion of the perceiver be destroyed and another remain undestroyed? However, this (situation) is not possible.

Note: The perceiver is a collective term for the function of the *skandhas.*

Verse 27

upādānaikadeśaśca kathaṃ nāma vinaṅkṣyate/
na naṅkṣyate caikadeśo naitadapyupapadyate//

How, indeed, could one portion of the perception be destroyed and another remain undestroyed? This, (situation), again, is not possible.

Note: The perception refers to the clinging or grasping function of the *skandhas.*

Verse 28

antavaccāpyanantaṃ ca prasiddhamubhayaṃ yadi/
siddhe naivāntavatkāmaṃ naivānantavadityapi//

If both the limited and non-limited could be established (concomitantly), then, similarly, neither the limited nor non-limited could also be established at will.

Verse 29

atha vā sarvabhāvānāṃ śūnyatvācchāśvatādayaḥ/
kva kasya katamāḥ kasmātsaṃbhaviṣyanti dṛṣṭayaḥ//

Since all existences are of the nature of *śūnyatā*, where, by whom and in what manner could such (false) views on constancy, etc., ever arise?

Verse 30

sarvadṛṣṭiprahāṇāya yaḥ saddharmamadeśayat/
anukampāmupādāya taṃ namasyāmi gautamaṃ//

I reverently bow to Gautama (the Buddha) who out of compassion has taught the truth of being (*saddharma*) in order to destroy all (false) views.

GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS WITH ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

(Arranged according to Devanāgarī Alphabet)

Sanskrit	*English*
akartṛka	non-doer
agata	not gone; "that which has not passed;" "that which has not transpired"
agantṛ	a non-passing entity
agni	fire; light
aṃśa	a share; portion; part
ajyate	to be known; to distinguish
atīta	gone by; past
adṛśyamāna	unseeing; unknowing
adveṣa	absence of hatred
adhama	below; down; under
adhigamyate	attained; to have arrived at
adhilaya	objection; refutation
adhipateya-pratyaya	dominant or ruling condition
adhyātman	inside; internal
adhvan	time; period
aṅkura	a sprout
ananta	infinite
anantara-pratyaya	continuous or consequential condition
anapekṣya	no mutual dependency
anavastha	non-finality; endless series; *ad infinitum*
anāgamya	unattainable; unapproachable
anāgata	not gone; future
anārabdha	impracticality or impossibility of undertaking
anāśritya	non-reliance
anāsrava	the uncreative and undefiled world or realm
anityatā	impermance; transient existence or nature
anīkṣa	incapable of perception
aniruddha	non-destructive
anukampā	sympathy; compassion
anutpāda	non-origination
anubhava	perception; experience
anuvarṇita	mentioned; praised
anekavidha	variety; manifold
anta	limit; terminus; extreme

antavat	finite
andhakāra	darkness
anya	different; distinct; other
anyatra	elsewhere; in another place or occassion
anyatva	difference; different nature
anyathābhāva	varying nature
anyonya	one to another; mutuality; correspondence
apakarṣaṇa	drawing off; disengagement
apara koṭi	the "state" posterior to life-death cycle
aparānta	posterior state
aparapratyaya	non-relational to another entity
apekṣya	dependence; mutuality; contingency
aprahīṇa	non-abandoning; non-casting off
abhāṣa	spoken; illumined
abhidhātavya	to be named or described
abhipravartate	to come or flow forth; arise
abhiprāya	purpose; intention
abhirūḍha	horseback; mounting (a horse)
abhyupapanna	agreed to; admitted
amṛta	immortality; eternal
amoha	absence of ignorance or delusion
artha	purpose; meaning; object
alam	sufficient; adequate; able
alpabuddhi	low intellect or intelligence
avagacchati	conceive; understand
avara	beginning
avaśeṣa	remainder; leavings
avasthā	abiding state; remaining condition
avayava	part; portion; member
avijñapti	indescribable; unthinkable
avipraṇāśa	imperishable or continuing action
avyākṛta	indeterminate; indescribable
aṣṭau puruṣapudgalaḥ	the eight great states of man
asaṃjñika	non-conceptual realm
asaṃsarga	separation; disjunction
asaṃskṛta	the uncreated realm; immutability
astitva	state of being
asvabhāva	without self-nature
astaṃgata	ceased; extinguished
akritābhyāgamabhaya	evil or crime existing without any act or action
ākāśa	space; subtle and ethereal fluid pervading the universe and a vehicle of life
ākhyāta	answered; discussed
āgama	appear; come into existence

ājavaṃjavībhāva	revolving of birth-death phenomenon
ātman	self; ego; individuality; bifurcated self
ātmasaṃyamaka	self-restraining or checking
ātmīya	ownself; selfhood
anānārtham	non-differentiation
āpākakāla	time of being extended or of maturity
āryasatya	noble truth
ālambana-pratyaya	seizing or appropriating condition
āloka	light; luster
āśrīyeta	to be dependent upon; appeal to
āsrava	that which attaches man to saṃsāra; impure; "flooding" or "sailing" condition
āyatana	seats of perception; abode
āhetuka	non-causal
indhana	wood; fuel; kindling
indriya	root; faculty of the senses
iṣyate	to be approved or acknowledged
ihastha	remaining thus; in such a place or world
uccheda	extirpation; cutting off; end
uttama	above; up
uttara	after; behind
utpadyamāna	presently arising
utpāda	rise; origination; appearance
utpādotpāda	origination of origination; force behind origination
udaya	production; creation
udāhṛta	described; illustrated
udbhava	arise; becoming visible
udbhūti	simultaneous occurence; concomitance
upagamyate	to admit; profess
upadiśyate	to point out; instructed
upapādita	previously spoken or discussed
upapāduka	demon; superhuman being
upapadyate	take place or become a possibility; tenable
upaśānta	quiescence
upaśama	cessation; quiescence
upahṛta	succumb; destroy
upādātṛ	perceiver; percipient
upādāna	act of perceiving or appropriating for one's self; clinging action or perception
upādāya	having received or acquired; mutuality
upāyāsa	mental disturbance; irritation
upālambha	censor; reproach
ūrdhva	hereafter; subsequent
ṛddhisampad	supernatural power

ṛṇa	debt; duty; obligation
ṛte	with the exclusion of; without; separation
ekaika	one by one; individually
ekadā	at the same time; simultaneous
ekadeśa	a part or portion
ekatra	in the same place
ekatva	one; unity
ekārtha	oneness; identity
ekibhāva	becoming one; coalition
kathaṃ	how; in what manner
karaṇa	means of doing, making or effecting
kartṛ (kartā)	doer; maker; agent
karmaka	action; function; what is done or produced
karman	act; action; deed
karmakleśakṣaya	destruction or extinction of karma and defilements
karmavadha	denial of the karman; destruction
kalpana	imagining; discriminating; thinking
kāma	desires; as one wishes
kāraka	one who creates or produces; making; doing
kāraṇa	cause of anything; potential cause; instrumental or efficient cause
kārya	that which is created or effected
kāla	time; moment
kāyika	bodily; corporeal
kiṃcit	something; whatever
kūṭastha	immovable; unchangeable
kṛtaka	character or nature of having been made or done
kevala	only; mere; simple
koṭi	limits; boundary; end
kovida	learned; experienced; skilled
krama	steps; series; uninterrupted or regular progress
kramatām	appearance; manifestation
kriyā	doing; making; action; functional force
kṣaya	cease; destruction; wane
kṣira	milk
gata	gone; "that which has passed or transpired"
gati	passage; movement into the past
ganta, gantṛ	passing or passed agent or entity; something accomplished or done
gantavya	to be accomplished; "that which is to be done"
gandharvanagara	"Gandharva city" or an imaginary city in the sky
gamana	passing action; "coming to pass"
gambhira	deep; profound
gamyamāna	"present passing away"; being gone or gone to

gamyate	to come to pass; to be understood or meant
grāha	to grasp or cling
gṛhyate	to be seized or grasped; conceived; manipulated
ghaṭa	jar; pitcher
ghana	hard; firm; deep
ghrāṇa	nose; smelling function
cakṣus	eye
catuṣkoṭikā	four possible assertions; "four-cornered logic"
catuṣṭaya	fourfold
carama bhava	last or previous nature of being; final
cāturvidhya	fourfold
citta	mind
cittagocara	realm of the mind
cintya, cintā	think; reflect
cetanā	thought
cetayitvā	thought in action; thought process
ceṣṭā	motion; activity; action
chedana	sever; cut off
jagat	people; mankind; world
jarāmaraṇa	old age- death
jāta	the present; arise
jānīyāt	understood; comprehended
jāyamāna	presently arising
jina	wise man; a buddha
jīrṇa	age
tajjam	to take rise; arise
tattva	true or real state; truth
tathāgata	thuscome; thusgone; the enlightened being
tathatā	thusness; suchness; thatness
tamas	darkness; ignorance
tamovadha	overcoming or subduing darkness; destroying ignorance
tiraskṛta	set aside or apart; separation; removed
tiṣṭhati	remaining; abiding; residing
tulyakāla	contemporary with; simultaneous
tṛtīya	the third
tṛṣṇā	craving; desire; passion
dadhi	butter; mouldy butter
darśana	eye function; vision; perception; knowledge
dīpārcis	flame; kindling
duravagāhatā	difficult in the attainment or understanding
durgṛhīta	wrong or false seizure or understanding
duṣprasādhita	difficult in the execution or performance
duḥkha	pain; suffering; unrest

dṛṣṭānta	illustration; simile; example
dṛṣṭi	view; normally false view or dogmatic belief
deha	body; form; bulk or mass
doṣa	error; defect
doṣaprasaṅga	rise or contingency of error; fall into or result in error
daurmanasya	dejectedness; melancholy
draṣṭṛ; draṣṭā	one who sees; viewer; seeing agent
dvidhā	of two kinds; twofold
dviśo dviśas	in pairs; twofold
dveṣa	repugnance; enmity; hatred
dharma	law; duty; phenomenon; factors of existence
dharmatā	inherent nature; essence of existence
dharmin	endowed with any characteristic or mark; attributes or peculiarities
dhātu	stratum; realm of being; constituent element or part of world construct
nadī	river
nānābhāva	various; manifold
nāmarūpa	name and materiality (material form); subjective-objective bond; subjective corporeality
nāśa	disappearance; annihilation
nāstitva	state of non-being or non-entity
niyama	certainty; restriction
nirapekṣā	non-mutual dependence
nirudhyamāna	presently extinguishing or being destroyed
niruddha	destroyed or ceased
nirodha	extinction; annihilation; cessation
nirmitaka	transformer; creator; maker
nirmukta	separated; cut off from
nirvāṇa	state of being in which all defilements are extinguished; perfect calm; bliss, etc.
nirvāṇa samāropa	instituting or establishing of nirvāṇa
nirvikalpa	non-discriminative mind
nirvartaka	bringing about; effectuating
niścaya	ascertainment; conviction
niṣicyate	to be infused or instilled
niḥsaraṇa	relinquishing; forsaking
niḥsvabhāva	without self-nature or self-existence; true nature of being
pañca kāmaguṇa	five sensual enjoyments; objects of the five senses
paṭa	woven cloth; garment
pattra	document; a paper
parakṛta	other-caused

parabhāva	other-nature; extended nature; relational existence
paramarṣi	great sage or divine man
paramārtha	absolute; highest; supreme (truth)
paraloka	another world or realm of existence
paraspara	mutual; reciprocal; mutual extension, relationship
parānugrāhaka	concern for or kindness to others
parikīrtita	proclaimed; announced; explained
parijñā	knowledge; insight
paridevana	sorrow; grief
paripātayat	whirl about; throw about
paribhoga	enjoyment; reception
parihāra	denial; avoidance
paryanta	the end; termination
paryāpta	possible; sufficiency
pāla	guard; keeper; protector
paścima	final; conclusion
paśyati	seeing; rightly understanding
pitṛ	father
puṇya	auspicious; virtuous; good
putra	son; child
pudgala	man; individuality; sentient
punar	again; back
puruṣa	soul; a man
pūrva	prior; former
pūrva koṭi	"state" prior to life-death; primary state
pūrvānta	former or prior state
pṛthak	singly; separately; different
pṛthaktva	difference; diversity
prakāra	kind; class; types, etc.
prakāśa	illumine
prakṛti	original or primary substance; primal character or nature
prajñapti	provisional name or understanding; conceptual play
prajñapyate	grasped; understood
pratipannaka	one who has attained or arrived at (the four Buddhist orders, śrotāpanna, sakṛdāgamin, anāgamin and arhat).
pratibādhase	to destroy; to repel
pratibimbasama	an image in a mirror; representation
pratisiddha	denied; forbidden; criticized
pratiṣṭhita	abiding place; abode; enduring state
pratisaṃdhi	coming together; union
pratītya-samutpāda	relational origination; dependent origination; etc.
pratyaya	relational condition; correlation; co-operating

	cause; etc.
pratyākhyā	reject; deny
pratyukta	refuted; answered
pratyutpama	present state or existence
pratyudāvṛtta	cease; suspend; resolved against
prathama bhava	former being; prior
pradīpa	light; illumination
pradīyate	to be given or transmitted
prapañca	provisional; mere description; a phenomenal play of words or thought process; conceptual play
prabhṛti	et cetera; bringing forward
prayojana	intention; purpose
pravibhāga	distinction
praśama	cessation; tranquillity
prasakta	attached; resulting; "fallacious inference"
prasaṅga	inclination; *reductio ad absurdum*
prasajyate	to be the consequence of anything; to fall into an error
prasiddha	completion; effectuation
prahāṇa	relinquishing; abandoning; destroying
prahiṇoti	convey; bestow
prāg (prāñc)	former; prior
prāpti	attaintment; acquisition
phala	fruit; effect; result
phalavyatikrama	passing over or going beyond the fruit or effect
phalastha	one who has matured or arrived at
phalahetau	cause and effect
baddha	one who is bound; fettered entity; bondage
bahirdhā	outside; external
bandhana	to be bound; restricting
bīja	seed; impression
buddhaśāsana	Buddha's teaching
bodhi	enlightenment; attainment
bodhisattvacaryā	the way of the enlightened being
bhaṅga	cessation; destruction; breaking off
bhaya	fear; apprehension
bhava	becoming; existence
bhāva	true condition; nature; reality; being
bhāvanā	practicing; promoting; training in the enlightened way
bhūta	that which is or exists; reality; the four great elements; (earth, water, fire, wind)
bhūyas	once again; moreover
bhoktṛ	one who enjoys; percipient

maitra	benevolence; tolerance; compassion
mata	thought; imagined; understood
madhyamā pratipad	middle way or path; the ontological principle
mandamedhas	slow-witted
marīci	mirage; visionary illusion
mātṛ	mother
mārga	way; path
mithyā	wrongly; improperly
mucyate	to be released; delivered; freed
muṣyate	to take away; captivate; delude
mūlotpāda	root origination; primal origination
mriyate	to die; cease
mṛgyamāna	to seek or searching for
mṛṣā	false; useless; feign; untrue
mokṣa	release; liberation
moṣadharma	delusive factors; elements with delusive nature
moha	delusion; folly; ignorance
yujyate	to be fit or proper; justifiable; reasonable; possible
yuvan	youth; young man
yugapad	at the same time; simultaneous
yoga	act of yoking; combining; discipline
rakta	impassioned self; covetous self
rañjanīya	impassionable; desirous object
rasana	tongue; tasting activity
rāga	covetousness; greed
rūpa	material form; shape; corporeality
lakṣaṇa	characteristics; distinguishing marks
lakṣya	characterization; indicated; marked
loka	world; realm of existence
vande	bestowing honor; homage
vara	most excellent; precious
vāgviṣpanda	words and action
vācika	verbal; vocal
vikalpa	cogitation; false discrimination
vikāṅkṣasi	you so desire; aim at; seek for
vigraha	contest; argumentation
vicakṣaṇa	the wise; experienced
vicitra	manifold; various
vijñāna	consciousness; discriminative knowledge
vidyate	to exist; to be cognized
vidyamāna	presently existent; "being found"
vidyā	knowledge; magical spells; science; etc.
vidharma	devoid of attributes or qualities
vinā	separated; apart; without

vināśayati	to cause to frustrate or ruin
vinirmukta	liberated; cut off; separated
viparīta, viparyayagata	one who perverses
viparyaya, viparyāya	perversion; false perception
vipraṇaśyati	to be lost; perish
vibhava	without existence; bodiless; death force
vibhāga	difference; distinction
vimṛśasva	consideration; deliberation
virati	termination; cessation; abandonment
viruddha	inconsistent or incompatible; contradiction
viśeṣaṇa	distinction; difference
vismṛta	forgotten; non-recollection
vihanyase	frustrate; hinder; oppose; annihilate
vedaka	one who perceives or experiences
vedanā	feeling; perception
vyaya	mutable; cease
vyavasthita	abiding in a place; determined; resting; definite
vyavahāra	common practice; ordinary life
vyasta	discrete; singular; separated
vyākhyā	explanation; exposition
vyutsarga	refutation; rejection
śaknuyāt	capable; competent; potential
śama	extinction; tranquility; calm
śānta	tranquillity; quiescence
śāśvata	constant; eternality; permanency
śāsana	teaching; chastisement
śiras	head
śiva	auspicious; benign; wonderful
śukla karmapatha	the way of the purity of action
śuci	pure; radiant
śubha	purity
śūnya	thusness; "void"; "empty"; purity
śūnyatā	thusness; suchness (related to the perceiving "mind" or "self"); devoid of characteristics
śūnyatārtha	aim or meaning of suchness
śeṣa	remainder; residue
śoka	misery; anguish
śrotṛ	listener
śravaṇa	ear; hearing activity
saṃgati	coming together; union; concomitance
saṃghāta	union or combination; mass
saṃjñā	primary imagery perception
saṃjñita	made known; called
saṃtāna	continuity (as in burning flame); process

saṃnipāta	combination; collision; coming together
saṃniviśate	fix or establish in; entrust or commit anything
saṃprakāśa	to shine; illuminate
saṃpravartate	arise; evolve
saṃpravṛtti	coming forth; appearance
saṃśaya	doubt; uncertainty
saṃsarga	commingle; coalesce
saṃsaranti	passing from one state to another; "transmigratory" cycle of saṃsāra
saṃsāra	the life-death cycle; empirical realm
saṃsārāpakarṣaṇa	relinquishing or overcoming saṃsāra
saṃsṛjyamāna	presently combining or coalescing
saṃsṛṣṭa	"that which has combined"
saṃskāra	mental conformation or creation; the inception of imagery play
saṃskṛta	created realm; conditioned nature; realm of karmaic actions
saṃsraṣṭṛ	one who combines or coalesces
saṃvidyate	be found or obtained
saṃvṛti	mundane; empirical; relative; "covered"
sattva	living being; sentient
sadā	continually; perpetually
sadṛśa	resembling; conformable; corresponding
saddharma	truth; true nature of being
sadbhūta	real state of an entity or being
sabhāga	matching; resembling
sama	same; identical
samanvāhāra	assemblage; composite nature
samānadeśa	same place or sphere
samāropa	placing in or upon; establishment
samāśrita	resting upon or resorting to
samavasthita	fixed state or condition
samasta	compound; collective state; inherent in or pervading the whole of anything
samudaya	coming together; assemblage
samudeṣyate	to rise up or come together
samupāśritya	supported by; dependent upon
sambhava	arise; occurrence; becoming
samyak	proper; correct; wholesome
sarva	all; whole
sarvatraga	all-pervading; universal
sarvathā	all; at all occasions or circumstances
sarvadā	always; at all times
sarvaśas	collectively; all things or actions

saha	together or along with
sahabhāva	concomitance; co-existing
sākṣatkaraṇa	intuitive or immediate perception
sākṣikarma	evidence; testimony; confirmation
sādhanopāya	means of realization or accomplishment
sādhya	to be accomplished, effected or proved; contention
sāmagrī	collection; assemblage
sāṃprata	present moment; concomitance
sārdha	jointly; together; concretely
sāsrava	evils of this world; the realm of defilement and attachment; the flooding, clouding elements of being
siddha	accomplished; perfected; completed
sukha	bliss; joy; soothing wholesomeness
susūkṣma	minute; small; insignificant
skandha	the five constituents of being; (rūpa, vedanā, saṃjnā, saṃskāra, vijñāna)
strī	a girl; woman; wife
sthāna	remain; endure
sthitabhāva	enduring entity
sparśana	touching activity
svapna	dream
svabhāva	self-nature; self-existence; self-essence; own-being
svayaṃkṛta	self-caused
svarga	heaven
hetu	general cause; root or primary cause
hetu-pratyaya	primary causal condition; root-condition

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Rten cin ḥbrel bar ḥbyun baḥi sñin poḥi rnam par bśad pa; Pratītyasamutpādahṛdayavyākhyāna (緣起心解說) [因緣心論釋] Trans. by Ānanda, Grags ḥbyer śes rab. Taishō 1654(b); Tōhoku 3837.

Rtsod pa bzlog paḥi tshig leḥur byas pa shes bya ba; Vigrahavyāvartanīkārikā-nāma (諍廻頌) [廻諍論] Trans. by Jñānagarbha (847), Ska ba Dpal brtsegs. Taishō 1631; Nanjio 1251; Tōhoku 3828.

Rtsod pa bzlog paḥi ḥgrel pa; Vigrahavyāvartanīvṛtti (諍廻註) [廻諍論] Trans. by Jñānagarbha, Dpal brtsogs rakṣita. Tōhoku 3832; (Taishō 1631; Nanjio 1251).

Shib mo rnam par ḥthag pa shes bya baḥi mdo; Vaidalya-sūtra nāma (摧破と名づくる經) [廣破論] Trans. by Ananda, Grags ḥbyor śes rab. Tōhoku 3826.

Shib mo rnam par ḥthag pa shes bya baḥi rab tu byed pa; Vaidalya nāma prakaraṇa (摧破と名づくる論) [廣破論] Trans. by Jayānanda, Khu mdo sde ḥbar. Tōhoku 3830.

Srid pa ḥpho ba; Bhavasaṁkrānti (轉有) [大乘破有論] Trans. by Zla ba gshon nu. Taishō 1574; Nanjio 1305; Tōhoku 3840, 4162, 4558.

Ston pa ñid bdun cu paḥi tshig leḥur byas pa shes bya ba; Śūnyatāsaptatikārikā-nāma (空性七十頌) Trans. by Gshon nu mchog, Gñan Dar ma grags.. Tōhoku 3827.

Ston pa ñid bdun cu paḥi ḥgel pa; Śūnyatāsaptativṛtti (空性七十註) Trans. by Jinamitra, Ye śes sde. Tōhoku 3831.

Theg pa chen po ñi śu pa; Mahāyānaviṁṣikā (大乘二十) [大乘二十頌論] Trans. by Candrakumāra. Taishō 1576; Nanjio 1308; Tōhoku 3833, 4551.

Yi ge brgya pa; Akṣaraśataka (百字) [百字論] Chinese authorship is Āryadeva. Trans. by Gshon nu śes rab. Taishō 1572; Nanjio 1254; Tōhoku 3834.

Yi ge brgya pa shes bya baḥi ḥgrel pa; Akṣaraśataka nāma vṛtti [百字論] Chinese authorship is Āryadeva. Trans. by Gshon nu śes rab. Taishō 1572; Nanjio 1254; Tōhoku 3835.

Rāhulabhadra *Byan chub sems dpaḥi spyod yul yons su dag paḥi mdoḥi don mdor bsdus pa; Bodbisattvagocarapariśuddhisūtrārtha-*

saṃgraha (菩薩行境清淨經義略攝) Trans. by Sakyaśrībhadra, Gnubs Byams paḥi dpal. Tōhoku 3965.

3. CHINESE WORKS

Āryadeva

Kuang-pai-lun-pen 廣百論本 1 chuan. (*Catuḥśatakaśāstrakārikā nāma*) Trans. by Hsuan-tsang in 650 A.D. Taishō 1570; Nanjio 1189; Tōhoku 3846.

Pai-lun 百論 2 chuan. (*Śataka śāstra*) Trans. by Kumārajīva in 404 A.D. Trans. into English by Tucci, infra. Taishō 1569; Nanjio 1188.

Pai-tsu-lun 百字論 1 chuan. Trans. by Bodhiruci. (*Akṣaraśataka*) Tibetan authorship is Nāgārjuna. Taishō 1572; Nanjio 1254; Tōhoku 3835.

T'i-p'o-p'u-sa-shih-leng-ch'ieh-ching-chung-wai-tao-hsiao-ch'eng-nieh-p'an-lun 提婆菩薩釋楞伽經中外道小乘涅槃論 1 chuan. A commentary on the *Laṅkāvatara sūtra*. Trans. by Bodhiruci between 508 and 535 A.D. Taishō 1640; Nanjio 1260.

T'i-p'o-p'u-sa-p'o-leng-chieh-ching-chung-wai-tao-hsiao-cheng-ssu-tsung-lun 提婆菩薩破楞伽經中外道小乘四宗論 1 chuan. Another commentary on the *Laṅkāvatara sūtra*. Trans. by Bodhiruci between 508 and 535 A.D. Taishō 1639; Nanjio 1259.

Asaṅga

Shun-chung-lun 順中論, 順中論義入大般若波羅蜜經初品法門 2 chuan. Trans. by Prajñāruci in 543 A.D. Sanskrit title is various; *Madhyāntanugama śāstra; Madhyamaka-anusāra śāstra; Madhyantānusāraśāstra*; Dr. Ui Hakuju reconstructs as follows: *Madhyamaka-śāstra-artha-anugata-mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra - ādiparivarta - dharmaparyāya - praveśa*. Taishō 1565; Nanjio 1246.

Bhāvaviveka

Pan-jo-teng-lun-shih 般若燈論釋 15 chuan. (*Prajñapradīpa-mūlamadhyamakavṛtti*) Trans. by Prabhākaramitra between 630 and 632 A.D. Japanese translation by R. Hadani, *Kokuyaku Issaikyō* Chūganbu, Vol. 2, Tokyō: Daitō Shuppansha, 1930. Taishō 1566; Nanjio 1185; Tōhoku 3853.

Chi-tsang

Chung-kuan-lun-su (*chung-lu-su*) 中觀論疏 (中論疏) 10 chuan. "A Commentary on the *Madhyamaka Śāstra*" Written in 616 A.D.? Taishō 1824.

Erh-ti-i 二諦義 3 chuan. "Essay on the Double Truth or Twofold Truth". Taishō 1854.

Pai-lun-su 百論疏 9 chuan. "Commentary on the *Śataka Śāstra*". Written in 608 A.D. Taishō 1827.

	San-lun-hsuan-i 三論玄義 1 chuan. "A Compendium of the *San-lun* (Three Treatises)". Taishō 1852.
	Shih-erh-men-lun-su 十二門論疏 3 chuan. "Commentary on the *Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra*". Taishō 1825.
	Ta-shêng-hsuan-lun 大乘玄論 5 chuan. "A Treatise on the *Mahāyāna*". Taishō 1853.
Dharmapāla	*Ta-shêng-kuang-pai-lun-shih-lun* 大乘廣百論釋論 10 chuan. This is a commentary on Āryadeva's *Catuḥśataka*. Trans. by Hsuan-tsang in 650 A.D. Taishō 1571; Nanjio 1198.
Fa-tsang	*Shih-erh-men-lun-tsung-chih-i-chi* 十二門論宗致義記 2 chuan. Notations on Nāgārjuna's *Dvādaśanikāva* Śāstra. Taishō 1826.
Kumārajīva	*Lung-shu-p'u-sa-ch'uan* 龍樹菩薩傳 1 chuan. "Biography of Bodhisattva Nāgārjuna". Trans. between 402 and 412 A.D. Taishō 2047; Nanjio 1461.
	T'i-p'o-p'u-sa-ch'uan 提婆菩薩傳 1 chuan. "Biography of Bodhisattva Āryadeva". Trans. between 402 and 412 A.D. Taishō 2048; Nanjio 1462.
Nāgārjuna	*Hui-cheng-lun* 迴諍論 1 chuan. (*Vigraha-vyāvartanī*). Trans. by Vimokṣaprajñā and Prajñāruci in 541 A.D. Taishō 1631; Nanjio 1251; Tōhoku 3828.
	I-shu-lu-chia-lun 壹輸盧迦論 1 chuan. (*Ekaśloka Śāstra*). Trans. by Prajñāruci between 538 and 543 A.D. Taishō 1573; Nanjio 1212.
	Liu-shi-sung-ju-li-lun 六十頌如理論 1 chuan. (*Yuktiṣaṣṭikā-kārikā*). Trans. by Danapāla. A German translation by Phil Schaeffer, *Nāgārjuna, Yukti-ṣaṣṭikā*, infra., and a Japanese translation by Ryōtai Hadani, infra. Taishō 1575; Nanjio 1307; Tōhoku 3825.
	Lung-shu-p'u-sa-ch'uan-chieh-wang-sung 龍樹菩薩勸誡王頌 1 chuan. "Friendly Epistles" (*Suhṛllekha*). Trans. by I-tsing between 700 and 712 A.D. Taishō 1674; Nanjio 1441; Tōhoku 4496.
	Lung-shu-p'u-sa-ch'uan-fa-chu-wang-yao-chieh 龍樹菩薩勸發諸王要偈 1 chuan. Another version of The *Suhṛllekha*. Trans. by Saṃghavarman in 534 A.D. Taishō 1673; Nanjio 1440; Tōhoku 4496.
	Lung-shu-p'u-sa-wei-ch'an-t'o-chia-wang-shuo-fa-yao-chieh 龍樹菩薩爲禪陀迦王說法要偈 1 chuan. (*Aryanāgārjuna-bodhisattva-suhṛllekha*). Trans. by Guṇavarman in 431 A.D. Taishō 1672 (also 1673 and 1674); Nanjio 1464; Tōhōku 4496.

Ma-ho-pan-jo-po-lo-mi-ching-shih-lun 摩訶般若波羅蜜經釋論 100 chuan. (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā-upadeśa-śāstra*). This work is also known as the Chih-tu-lun 智度論 or the Ta-chih-tu-lun 大智度論 Trans. by Kumārajīva between 402 and 405 A.D. Taishō 1509; Nanjio 1169. See translations by E. Lamotte and K.V. Ramanan.

Pao-hsing-wang-cheng-lun 寶行王正論 1 chuan. (*Ārya-ratnāvalī*). "Buddhist Teachings to a King". Trans. by Paramārtha between 558 and 569 A.D. Taishō 1656; Nanjio 1253; Tōhoku 4158.

P'u-t'i-tzu-liang-lun 菩薩資糧論 6 chuan. "Treatise on the Materials for *Bodhi*". Trans. by Dharmagupta between 605 and 616 A.D. Taishō 1660; Nanjio 1181.

Shih-erh-men-lun 十二門論 1 chuan. (*Dvādaśa-dvāra Śāstra* or *Dvādaśa-nikāya Śāstra*). "Twelve Gates". Trans. by Kumārajīva in 409 A.D. Taishō 1568; Nanjio 1186.

Shi-chu-p'i-p'o-sha-lun 十住毘婆沙論 17 chuan. (*Daśa-bhūmi-vibhāṣa Śāstra*). "Exposition of the 10 Stages of Bodhisattvahood". Trans. by Kumārajīva in 405 A.D. Taishō 1521; Nanjio 1180.

Shi-pa-k'ung-lun 十八空論 1 chuan. (*Aṣṭādaśākāśa Śāstra* or *Aṣṭādaśaśūnyatā Śāstra*). "Treatise on the Eighteen Kinds of Śūnyatā". Trans. by Paramārtha between 557 and 569 A.D. This work treats the subject matter from the Vijñānavāda standpoint and therefore may not be the work of Nāgārjuna. Taishō 1616; Nanjio 1187.

Ta-shêng-erh-shih-sung-lun 大乘二十頌論 1 chuan. (*Mahāyāna viṃśaka*). "Twenty Verses on the Great Vehicle". Trans. by Dānapāla. Taishō 1576; Nanjio 1308; Tōhoku 3833, 4551.

Ta-shêng-p'o-yu-lun 大乘破有論 1 chuan. (*Bhavasaṃkrānti*). "Refutation of the Concept of Being in the Mahāyāna". Trans. by Dānapāla. Taishō 1574; Nanjio 1305.

Ta-chih-tu-lun 大智度論 100 chuan. (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā Śāstra*). "Commentary on the Great *Prajñāpāramitā Śāstra*". Confer *Mo-ho Pan-jo Po-lo-mi-ching Shih-lun*, supra.

Yin-yuan-hsin-lun-sung-yin-yuan-hsin-lun-shih 因緣心論頌因緣心論釋 1 chuan. "Verses on the Central Conception of Conditional Origination". Translator unknown. Taishō 1654; Tōhoku 3836(a), 4553(b).

Piṅgala (Piṅgalākṣa) *Chung-lun* (*Chung-kuan-lun*) 中論, 中觀論 4 chuan. (中論註釋) (*Madhyamaka Śāstra*). "A Commentary on the Verses of the Fundamental Middle (*Śūnyatā*)". Trans.

by Kumārajiva in 409 A.D. Taishō 1564; Nanjio 1179; Tōhoku 3860.

Seng-chao — *Chao-lun* (肇論) Taishō XXXXV, No. 1858. English translation by W. Liebenthal, *The Book of Chao*, infra. See also R. Robinson's book, infra.

Sthiramati — *Ta-shêng-chung-kuan-shih-lun* 大乘中觀釋論 9 chuan. (*Mūlamadhyamakasaṅdhinirmocana-vyākhyā*). "A Commentary on the Mahāyāna Fundamental Middle". Trans. by Wei-ching and others (Dharmarakṣa) between 1009 and 1050 A.D. Taishō 1567; Nanjio 1316.

4. JAPANESE WORKS

Anchō — *Chūron shoki* (*chūgwanron shoki*) 中論疏記 (中觀論疏記) 8 chuan. "Commentary Notes on the *Mādhyamika Sūtra*". Taishō 2255.

Kaiken — *Chūgwan ronhon shaku* (*Chūgwanron nijūshichihon bessha-ku*) 中觀論品釋 (中觀論二十七品別釋) 1 chuan. "Commentary on the Chapters of the *Mādhyamika Sūtra*". Commented on in 1527 A.D. Taishō 2256.

Zōkai — *Jūni monron sho monshi ki* 十二門論疏聞思記 1 chuan. "Notations on the Commentary of the *Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra*". Taishō 2257.

5. MODERN WORKS

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Volume II (1930) of the same *Kokuyaku Issaikyō* Chūgan-bu, includes the Japanese translations of the *Pan-jo-teng-lun-shih* of Bhāvaviveka.

Volume III (1932) of the same *Kokuyaku Issaikyō,* Chūgan-bu, includes the following Japanese translations: *Pai-tzu-lun, I-shu-lu-chia-lun, Ta-ch'eng-p'o-yu-lun, Liu-shi-sung-ju-li-lun, Ta-ch'eng-erh-shi-sung-lun, Kuang-pai-lun-pen.*

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Nāgārjuna has held continuous attention of Buddhist scholars in Asia since his own day.Even today he commands the greatest attention in the Western world insofar as philosophic Māhāyana tradition is concerned. Though he did not establish a school of a system of thought as such, he did attract such overwhelming interest and appeal on the part of the masses by way of his unique writings that a tradition of a sort soon arose during his lifetime and a large following in consequence of it. His ideas though subtle and profound, carried such deep understanding and implications of fundamental Buddhist truths that they will influence ,one way or another, all or most the subsequent Māhāyana developments in India, China, Tibet, Korea and Japan.

The present work lay bare before the scholars the unique thought of Nāgārjuna in translation by way of his major work, the Mūlamadhyamakakārikā and by way of an introductory essay on his philosophy.The complete English translation of the Kārikā in 27 Chapters is presented in sequence with the romanized version of the Sanskrit verses for easy reference short prefatory remarks to each chapter have been inserted in order to present the reader a quick glimpse of each chapter content.The book contains glossary of Sanskrit terms with their English meanings.The book is published in the Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica Series

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